

Columbus, Lesser

Greater Bristol By Lesser Columbus

London 1893

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Greater Bristol
or Columbus
Lesser

COCOA
IN
PERFECTION.

FRY'S

PURE
CONCENTRATED

cocoa.

BY SPECIAL APPOINTMENT

RECOMMENDED BY
THE HIGHEST
MEDICAL
AUTHORITIES
FOR ITS
PURITY · SOLUBILITY ·
AND
EXCELLENCE.

60 PRIZE MEDALS AWARDED
TO J. S. FRY & SONS.
BRISTOL · LONDON & SYDNEY.

BE · SURE · AND · ASK · FOR · FRY'S · PURE · CONCENTRATED · COCOA ·

HAT MANUFACTURERS

Betty Bros & Co

all varieties of
FELT HATS

SOLE MANUFACTURERS OF
PLIABLE CONSOL
SILK HATS

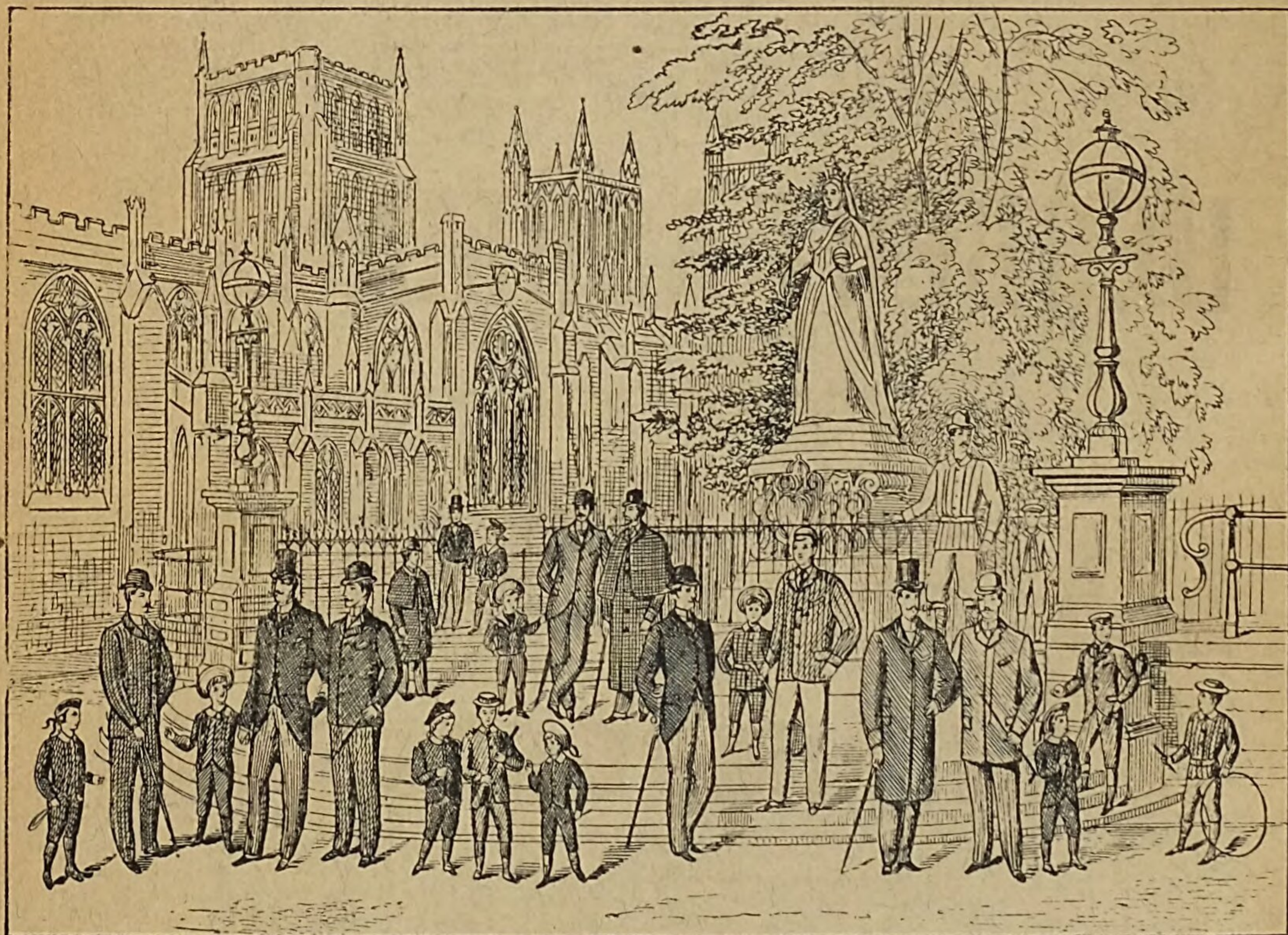
CAPS
of
EVERY DESCRIPTION

BRISTOL

TRADE MARK
INDUSTRIA

The advertisement is framed by a decorative scroll. On the right side, a potted plant is suspended by strings. Two hats are also depicted: a top hat and a bowler hat.

READY-MADE-OPOLIS, BROAD STREET, BRISTOL.



STYLE, FIT & DURABILITY COMBINED

**WHOLESALE CLOTHING
MANUFACTURERS.**

Home and Export.

WATHEN, GARDINER, & CO.

London Office: 25, JEWIN CRESCENT, E.C.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS, ASHMAN, BRISTOL.

TELEPHONE, No. 114.



HERBERT ASHMAN & CO

1 to 5, BROADMEAD, BRISTOL,

LEATHER MERCHANTS AND IMPORTERS.

MANUFACTURERS OF

LEATHER DRIVING BELTS

for all kinds of Machinery.

HOME AND EXPORT.

ENQUIRIES SOLICITED. PRICE LISTS FREE.

ESTABLISHED 1846.



The GOLDEN CUPID

Wedding, Keeper, and Engagement
Ring Establishment.

(TRADE MARK AND TITLE REGISTERED.)

FEAR'S
4, BRISTOL BRIDGE, BRISTOL.

Watches,
Clocks,
Gold and Silver
Jewellery,
Electro-Silver
Spoons
and Forks.



Large Selection
of Articles
Suitable for
Birthday,
Wedding and
Complimentary
Presents.

EVERY WATCH AND CLOCK WARRANTED.

Watch, Clock, and Jewellery Repairs by Experienced
English and Foreign Workmen.

N.B.—Price Lists and a set of Ring Sizes sent to any Address on Receipt of Stamped Envelope.

LARGE STOCK.

BEST GOODS.

LOWEST PRICES.

LAVERTON & Co.,

Cabinet Makers, Upholsterers,

CARPET WAREHOUSEMEN,

General House Furnishers,

MARYPORT STREET AND BRIDGE STREET,
BRISTOL,

Are UNEQUALLED in Bristol or the West of England as Manufacturers of

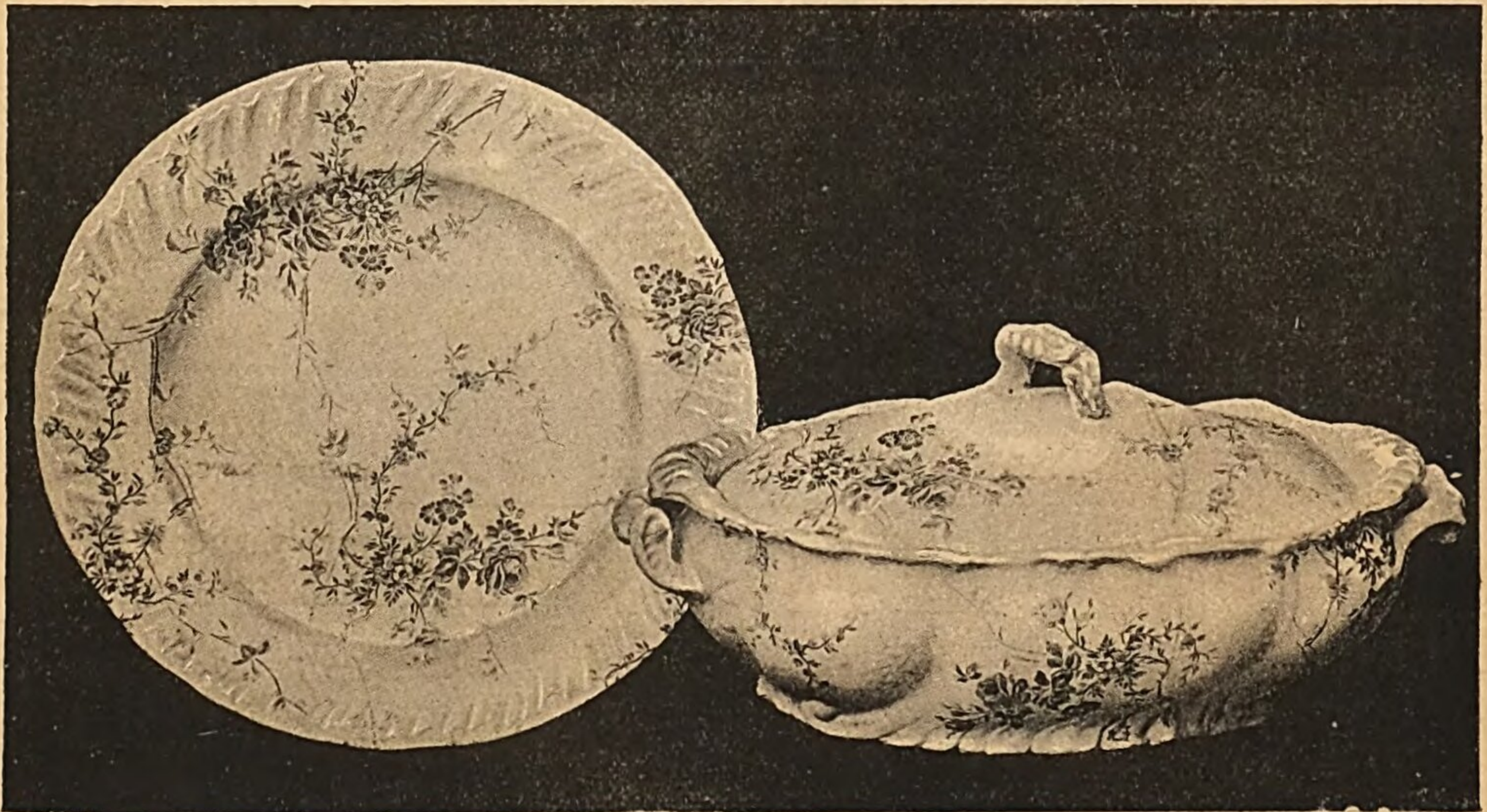
FURNITURE.

PURE IN DESIGN, DURABLE, & INEXPENSIVE.

CATALOGUES ON APPLICATION.

Carriage Paid to any Railway Station in the Kingdom.

S. J. KEPPLE & SON, 3, Clare St., BRISTOL.



KEPPLE'S ROYAL SEMI-PORCELAIN.—Write for Price Lists ($4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per Plate).

ART POTTERY, GLASS, and WARE of every description

Our large Warehouses enable us to give exceptional value to retail customers.

HOTEL DEPARTMENT.—We can show a Stock of every Requisite at the lowest prices in England.

WHOLESALE—RETAIL—EXPORT.

CHRIST^R THOMAS & BROS LTD


 ESTABLISHED 1745


 SAML
FRIPP
& Co
BRISTOL
1745

FRIPP'S SOAP
FINEST
OLIVE OIL

FINEST
OLD BROWN
WINDSOR
SOAP

FINEST
HONEY SOAP

CHRIST^R THOMAS & BROS LTD
ESTABLISHED
1745
BRISTOL

PURE
GLYCERINE
SOAP

CHRIST^R THOMAS & BROS LTD
BRISTOL

THOMAS'S
Perfect
CLEANSER

CLIFTON TOILET

THOMAS'S
BRISTOL
CLEANSER

THOMAS'S
BRISTOL
CLEANSER

CHRIST^R THOMAS & BROS
ELEGANT
GOLD WATER SOAP  QUALITY

CHRIST^R THOMAS & BROS LIMITED
PRIMROSE

Broad Plain Soap & Candle Works

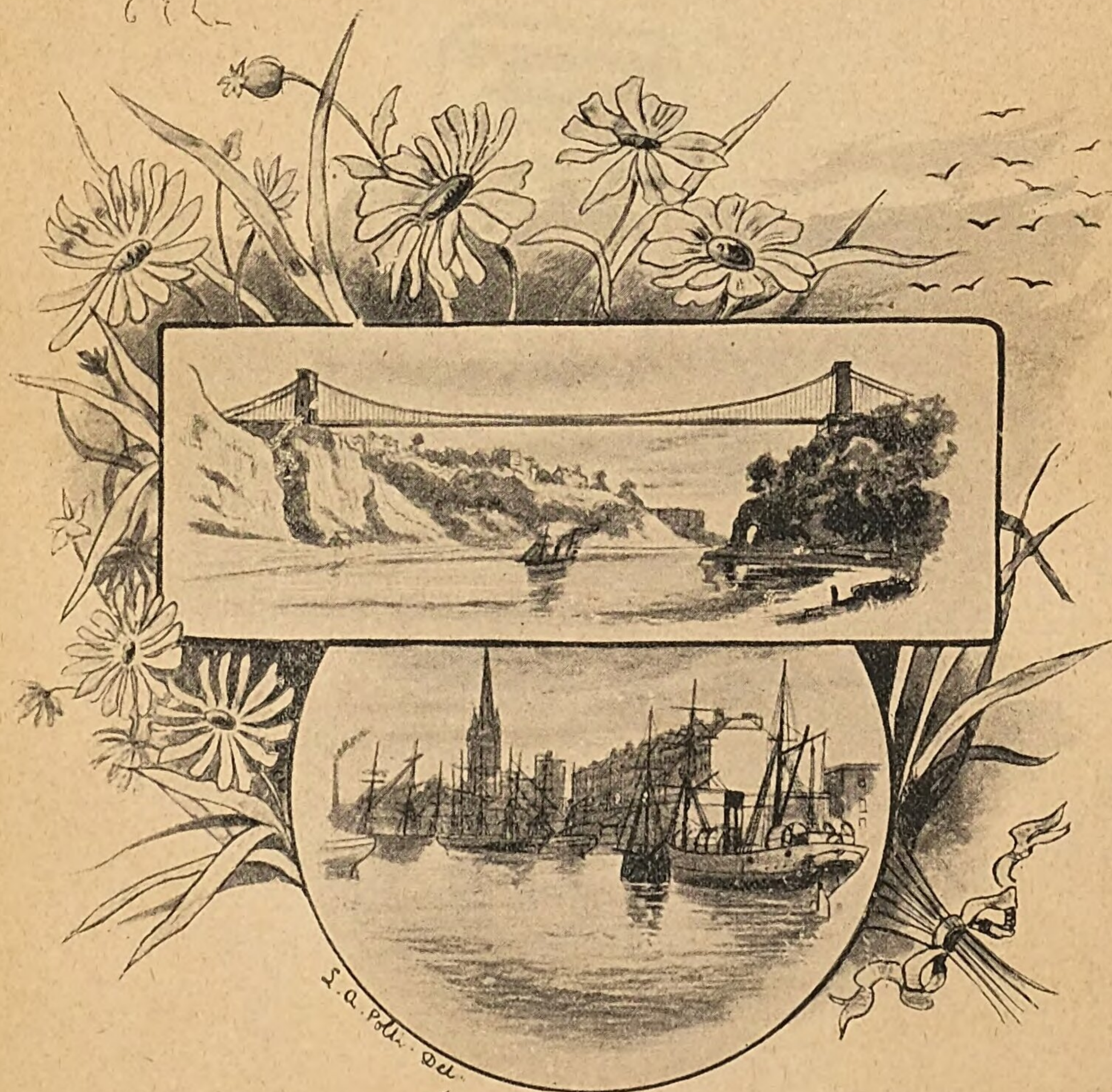


G. Thimmann.

GREATER BRISTOL.

GREATER BRISTOL

BY Lesser Columbus



LONDON.
THE PELHAM PRESS, LTD.

AND
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & CO. LTD

1893.

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G. n. 11483



TO BRISTOLIANS

PAST, PRESENT, AND TO COME,

THIS PERSONAL STUDY OF THEMSELVES

Is Dedicated

BY THEIR

DISCOVERER, HISTORIOGRAPHER,

AND

FRIEND,

The Author.

P R E F A C E.



HIS book has not been written to supply a want, and in this may be found its only claim to originality. But there is a reason for its being—as for greater things—for it is intended to be read. It has been considered impossible to treat of Bristol or its people humorously. It had never been done, for one thing, and Bristolians were in the habit of taking themselves so seriously, for another. There are many who will now be positive of its impracticability.

No one has forestalled me in writing this book, and, as far as I am concerned, I am not likely to repeat the offence. I am indebted to myself for the manner in which I have treated my subject, but I have also to thank many whose suggestions have not been incorporated. I had no wish to make the work suggestive.

In spite of its pretensions to rank as history, *Greater Bristol* contains much that can be corroborated. It recapitulates many facts, the responsibility for which must be shared equally by Latimer's *Annals of Bristol*; *Bristol: Past and Present*; and *The History of the Port of Bristol*. Many of the others are my own, and are copyrighted. I can honestly assert for these—the teachings of Buddha notwithstanding—that they never had a previous existence. It now only remains for me to state, perhaps unnecessarily, that everything of an unpleasant nature in the following pages owes its inception to the former sources. So, should the reader disapprove of aught, it is no fault of mine.

I have dared to speak of Bristol and Bristolians as I have “found” them. That is my fault, but, I trust, not necessarily their misfortune.

LESSER COLUMBUS.

1893.

PREFACE TO SUBSEQUENT EDITIONS.

MANY reprints of this work having been issued, and translations published in various foreign languages, I have been induced to revise it carefully, and to make additions wherever they seemed most undesirable. It has not yet been translated into Polish, Servian, or Japanese.

LESSER COLUMBUS.

1893.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

I DESIRE to bear evidence—not, as might have been expected, *in camera*—to the obliging disposition of the photographers of Bristol. They have met my requests for assistance with numerous negatives, for which I am positively grateful. To Mr. Lindon Hatt I am particularly indebted, as also to Messrs. Harvey Barton; Villiers & Quick; Protheroe; Midwinter & Co.; Frieze-Green, Simpson & Co., Limited; Abel Lewis; Morris; and Fisher. Mr. J. W. Arrowsmith removed any blocks to the proper illustration of “Greater Bristol,” by placing several of his own at my disposal. I have also to thank Mr. Fred. W. Lewis for many hints—some of which I have taken.

PART I.
HISTORIES.

CHAPTER I.

IT came about in this way—

“*Lost, stolen, or strayed:—*

“*An ancient city, known as Bristol. Not heard of for some time. When last seen was wearing well, and running uneventfully over a number of hills. Will be easily recognized by the narrowness of its streets, and a plethora of aldermen. Its principal characteristics are churches, charities, and children. Anyone discovering the same, or giving such information as will lead to its recovery, will be suitably rewarded at the expense of the nation.*

“*Lost Property Office,*

“*Houses of Parliament,*

“*Westminster.*”

There was no doubt about it. There was the announcement staring me black and white in the face, from the columns of the newspaper. To say that I was stirred consumedly would be a mixed metaphor. The recollections of a remote past, the divine doctrine of heredity, the knowledge that there flowed in my veins the blood of the most illustrious discoverer the world had ever seen and neglected—all tended to rouse me to action. The advertisement appeared to have been written to catch my eye. So it struck me at the time. My finer instincts prompted me to undertake this quest: my *corsair* feelings but nerved me to take action in a course which would bring both honour and glory to the adventurer. The temptation was a great one.

The real thing in discoverers is born, not made. There was scarcely anything I was more certain of than that of being born. I had not, like so many self-made men, absolved Providence from a terrible responsibility. I was therefore able to establish to my complete satisfaction my ability, in the first place, to accomplish my self-imposed task. I had, besides, a great knowledge of my own and every other species; neither man nor woman was a sealed book of revelations to me. I had always been able to rise superior to sitting at my own fireside. I found out that the truest contentment frequently lay in taking things easy at someone else's inn. It was not meet that I should keep to my own vegetarian circle what was meant for the whole globe. I was not only able to chronicle faithfully the things that I might see, but those I could not understand. The whole current of my thoughts, the *raison d'être* of my future earthly existence, seemed bound up in the fruitful possibilities of a fitting

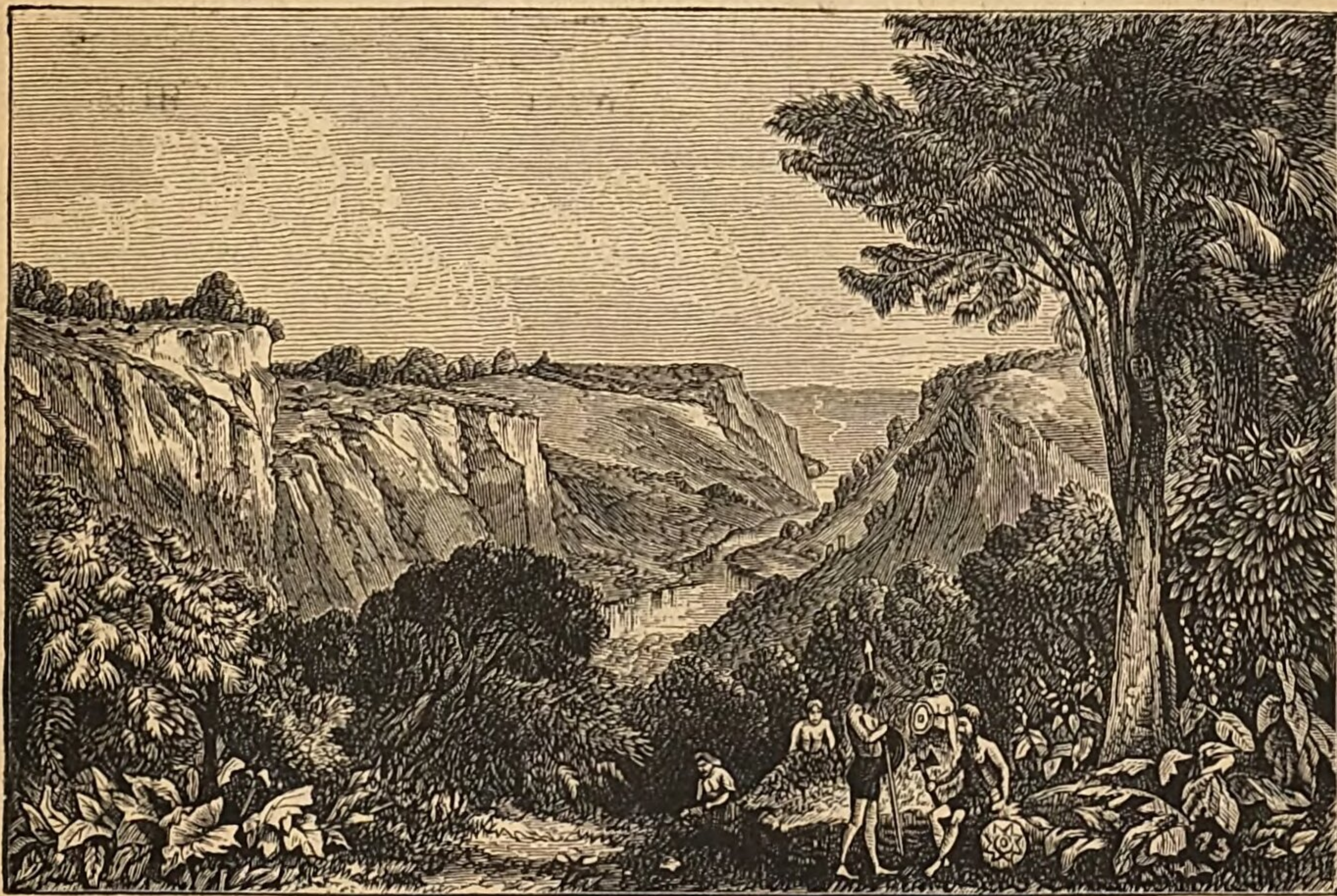
answer to that advertisement. I felt what it was to be moved on by the force of circumstances. And, in short, I longed for the time to come when I might search for the lost city, and restore to an ancient kingdom the hoariest heirloom in its crown.

And then the importance of it!

The disappearance of the city of Bristol from the active face of the earth was one of the mysteries that no legerdemain could explain. To me, Bristol was little more than a name, linked with associations of a bygone period, in which it had always played a leading part. Ancient records, to which I had access, demonstrated this without doubt. History would have us believe many strangely wonderful things relative to the importance of the old city's status in a time that never was and never could be—ours. And although the publication of this work will give to this generation the first authoritative information on the subject, it is well that I should preface the narrative of my own labours in the world of discovery and invention, by giving a digest of the hard-to-digest account of academic historians working with the same materials, but by different methods.

CHAPTER II.

ONCE upon a time, about that conveniently imaginary period known as the Prehistoric era, for the knowledge about which I am indebted to the studies of anthropology, archæology, and bunkum, and for the actuality of which I do not intend to make myself in the least degree responsible, there lived the paleolithic man. No doubt that portion of the earth's surface subsequently monopolised by the Bristolian furnished its quota of this primitive person. But it is not of him that I would speak. I have only, perhaps out of a misguided courtesy, desired to acknowledge his existence. Having thus paid



A PREHISTORIC VIEW OF THE AVON.

to age the respect proverbially claimed for it, I will allow a few intervening centuries to pass by and devote the attention he deserves to the Iberian. This gentleman and many others of his kind and company had tentative quarters in the whole of the Avon Valley. The magnificent acreage provided for their predatory prowlings by the broad expanses of Clifton and Durdham Downs, made them put up with any counteracting disadvantages this neighbourhood at that time may have presented for model residential plots. The Iberian was possessed of many great characteristics. He was short in

stature, and long in cranium—and suffering. For he has been classified by ethnologists as responsible for the Dolichocephalic race. But let that pass. The Iberian dreamt dreams, believed in a future state, was an anti-cremationist, and in many other strange and diverse ways showed himself to be an unpractical and unmethodical person. He was something of an aristocrat, for he preached a primitive Fabianism, and kept slaves. It is not known in what language he preached. Presumably Gaelic. If so, posterity can pardon him many of his seeming faults. It appears that this type of early Father was assimilated with the Belgæ, when, in due course, his and other people's territory was disturbed by the Belgic invasion. But I can let that pass also.

Doubtless several things took place and were taken about this time. There is no reason to suppose that the usual methods associated with the evolution of the nineteenth century man were interfered with at this, more than at any other period. However, for reasons that do not require either notice or classification, it is best that I should take up my description at a time when I have—considering its historical associations—comparatively authentic record of the founding of Bristol, on the spot where the Iberian used to grow. This took place in the early British era, and the place was known as Bristowe. The original settlement was higher up please, on Clifton Hill. But in those unfashionable times Clifton transferred its residents to Bristol, and was an absolutely unfrequented village for over a thousand years. History has not repeated itself in this instance, unless from a Hibernian point of view.

After this—the Druids. The influence of this race of clergymen was as great in the West of England as elsewhere. In every part of the lands watered by the Avon, the stony remains of their departed greatness have been dug up for the confusion of an unbelieving posterity. But more remains—though these are Roman. For I will allow another convenient lot of centuries to elapse—I will leave the picture afforded by those innocent and uncommercial natives, whose primitive forms wore nothing but some paint and an unbusinesslike smile. The Romans brought with them the first principles of clothing and commerce, and held the memory of the prolific, profane, and pronouncedly immodest people whom they displaced, in profound disrespect. For they were bare of all culture, though, unlike the Romans and those who came after them, they appear to have appreciated the naked truth. The ancient Britons lived in huts, and a state of barbarism. The Romans introduced flats and lived in them. And on them. But that is another storey.

The people of Bristowe became Romanised, and gradually settled down into the ways of civilisation, the habit of settling-up not being one of them. There are undoubtedly authentic proofs of Roman occupation, which not even a historian can afford to ignore. What with walls above ground, and coins beneath, I am driven to the conclusion that Bristol, though founded many centuries before their advent, was fortified as well as planned by the Romans.

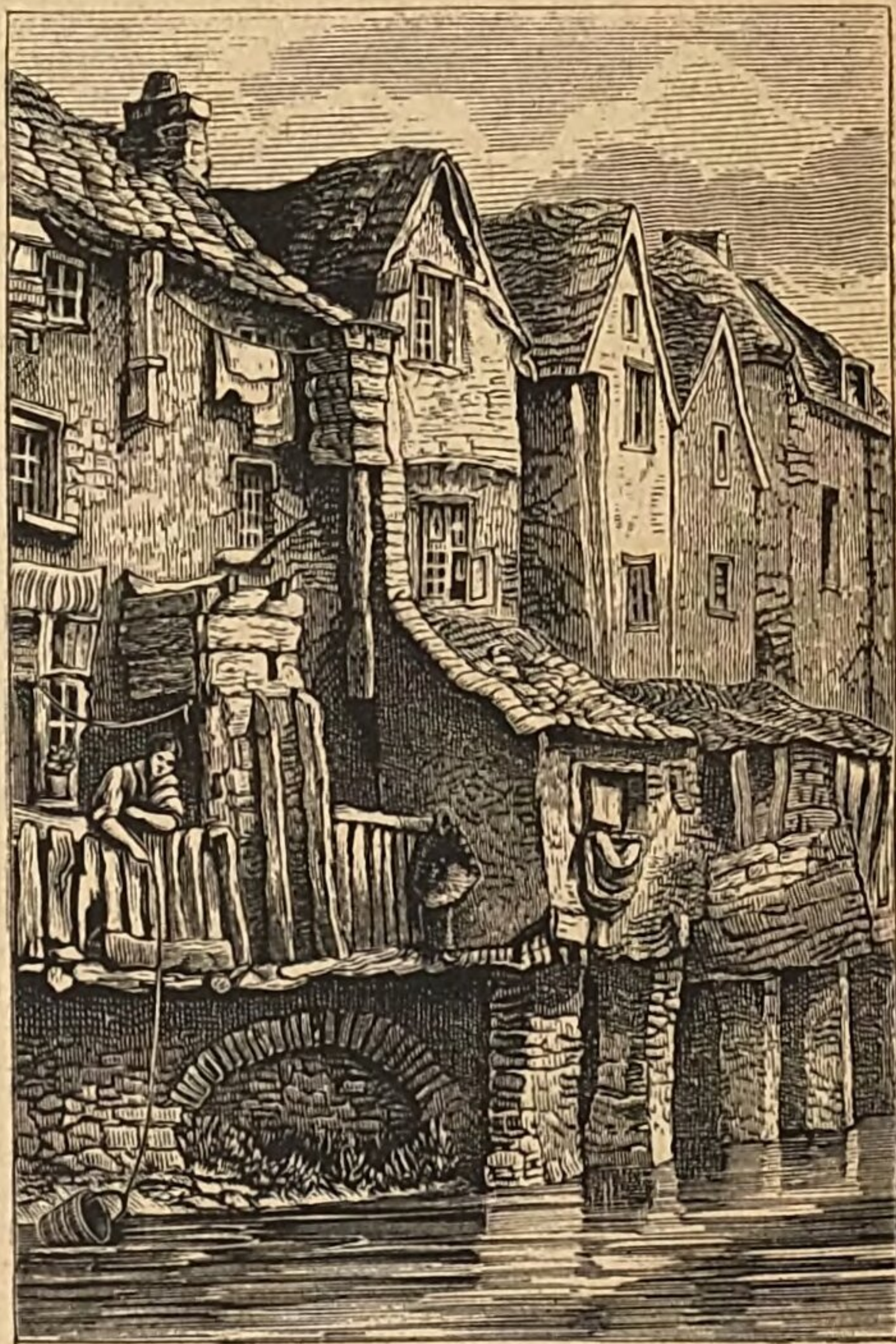
After Honorius had withdrawn his troops from Britain, the mis-management of the country was undertaken by native chieftains. Things went on fairly unsatisfactorily, until we have it recorded that in A.D. 586 the kingdom of Mercia was founded by Cridda, and by him eventually confounded. For it was then that the town made its first step

towards that importance which is the spoiling of men and things. Bristol was the south-western frontier town of the province, and took premier rank in its councils. Here it was that the patron saint St. Augustine, or his disciple Jordan, or both—it really doesn't matter a saint which—first preached the Gospel, and assisted the great work which Bristol was foremost in advancing—the Christianising of the land.

As early as this period the town manifested strong maritime aspirations. Its proximity to the estuary of the Severn—a queen among waterways—its position on the Avon, offered such advantages for offence and defence alike, that all those who with armed forces “went down to the sea in ships” must have availed themselves of them. It was at Bristol that the fleet fitted out by Harold in 1063 set forth to ravage the Welsh coast. The same Harold coined money in Bristol, as many others have done in this city of merchant princes, though in a different way. The Bristol mint has, right through the centuries, done its share towards the propagation of the gospel of wealth, as I hope to demonstrate. Bristol pennies of the reign of Edward the Confessor are very numerous, and seem to have best stood the test of time. Those were not the days of the morning newspaper and the wax-vesta fiend, and in consequence, the uses which that now indispensable coin could be put to were considerably curtailed.

Bristol must have got lost somehow about this time also, for it is recorded that the Normans found the place—wealthy and prosperous. It was inhabited by a maritime and a commercial people, whose forefathers had not left them mighty fortunes, and in so doing rendered enterprise a thing of choice and not of duty. It was these people that made

Bristol the second city in the kingdom, and their descendants, who for an honourable time, kept it there. The Bristolian of the period was not only interesting, but was able to defend his interests. When the sons of King Harold landed at Shirehampton, near the entrance to the Avon, in 1069, and marched on the city, the townsmen defended themselves so vigorously, that the invaders were ignominiously beaten back to their ships. The successful invasion of Bristol was not then. The shipping facilities afforded by the Avon before the days of its bridges were of course primitive in character. The river From passed through the city, and, turning a mill on its way, joined issues with the Avon at a place since known as Christmas steps. It was here that boats were hired by those who would to the other side go—forming stepping-stones to hire things. Perhaps I had better pass on once more.



NORMAN REMAINS.

The port traded in slaves, among other merchandise. It is, however, to the credit of the place that this questionable traffic was foregone the while it lingered in other places in England. The city took a prominent part in the warlike periods of the 12th century. One of the earliest of the many Royal visits paid it was in 1141 by King Stephen, who partook of compulsory hospitality at the local castle, after his defeat at Lincoln. Bristol was at this time the seat of government, and possessed many privileges. The earliest charter extant is dated 1162, but anterior to this the city had prerogatives of which it took the fullest advantage. It is to Bristol that we owe the political connection between England and Ireland—which may, or may not be cause for congratulation. The city of Dublin was bequeathed to the “men of Bristowe” by the second Henry, after his conquest of Ireland. This will be of interest to the Dublin people, many of whom may have been ignorant of the fact that they were, by the right of conquest—which has always meant the wrong of the conquered—Bristolians. The city obtained a charter from the third Henry in 1256, by which it was allowed to enjoy the same privileges as the rival city, London. The mayor was rated as an earl, and in truth was the head of a species of Republican state, represented by the township.

In the month of July, 1204, King John visited Bristol and stayed there three days. He signalled his visit by placing twenty casks of wine in the castle in preparedness for his occupation of that ancient Royal refuge. It is recorded that he gave away eighteen shillings and ninepence on this occasion as alms. His legs, doubtless, gave way on their own account, if those twenty casks scored anything. He went the seas over—not half-seas over—sailing from Bristol for Ireland in May, 1210. Bristol also received him gratefully on his return in August of the same year. He was “returned with thanks,” as it were.

In the year 1216 Bristol was the Royal residence of Henry III., which was sufficient honour for the time thereof, and history tells but little more. It is interesting to note, as an instance of the prominent position held by this ancient city industrially, that the great trades of the Middle Ages—weaving, soap-boiling, glass-blowing, &c.—were almost exclusively confined to Bristol. Those were non-competitive times. The cutting of St. Augustine’s trench, perhaps the first great engineering work associated with the city, was begun in 1239, and consisted of digging through a marsh a channel 2,400 feet long, 120 feet wide, and 18 feet deep. No small undertaking that, taking into consideration its purport and century. Of a truth the spirit of enterprise was fast declaring itself among Bristol merchants. Of course it has had lots of time to grow old and feeble since. For this remarkable work, it is said that the “honest men” of Bristol and Redcliff co-operated. So the public spirit it testified to is evidently the due of a limited minority of the citizens, after all. In 1254 a strange thing happened, to our present ways of thinking. The marriage of Prince Edward was made the occasion of presenting him and his consort Eleanor with “the town and castle of Bristol.” It was a way Royal people had in the good old days of dispensing trifling gifts. Prince Edward, it is evident, could not have kept too close a watch upon his marriage presents, as the record of the retaking of Bristol Castle by him from the Barons bears witness. This was in 1265, and the town was fined £1,000 for being lost. *Absit Omen.*

King Edward I. spent Christmas in Bristol after the birth of the first Prince of

Wales at Carnarvon. There is no cause assigned for this action. It is altogether inexplicable, and strangely out of keeping with that monarch's usually sane conduct. In 1293 Bristol had a Royal marriage all to itself, for the king's eldest daughter was united there to Henry, Earl of Barr. German princelings were not then invented. And then a singular incident. Bristolians had from time immemorial proved excellent rebels. A most remarkable stand for their rights and privileges was made by these

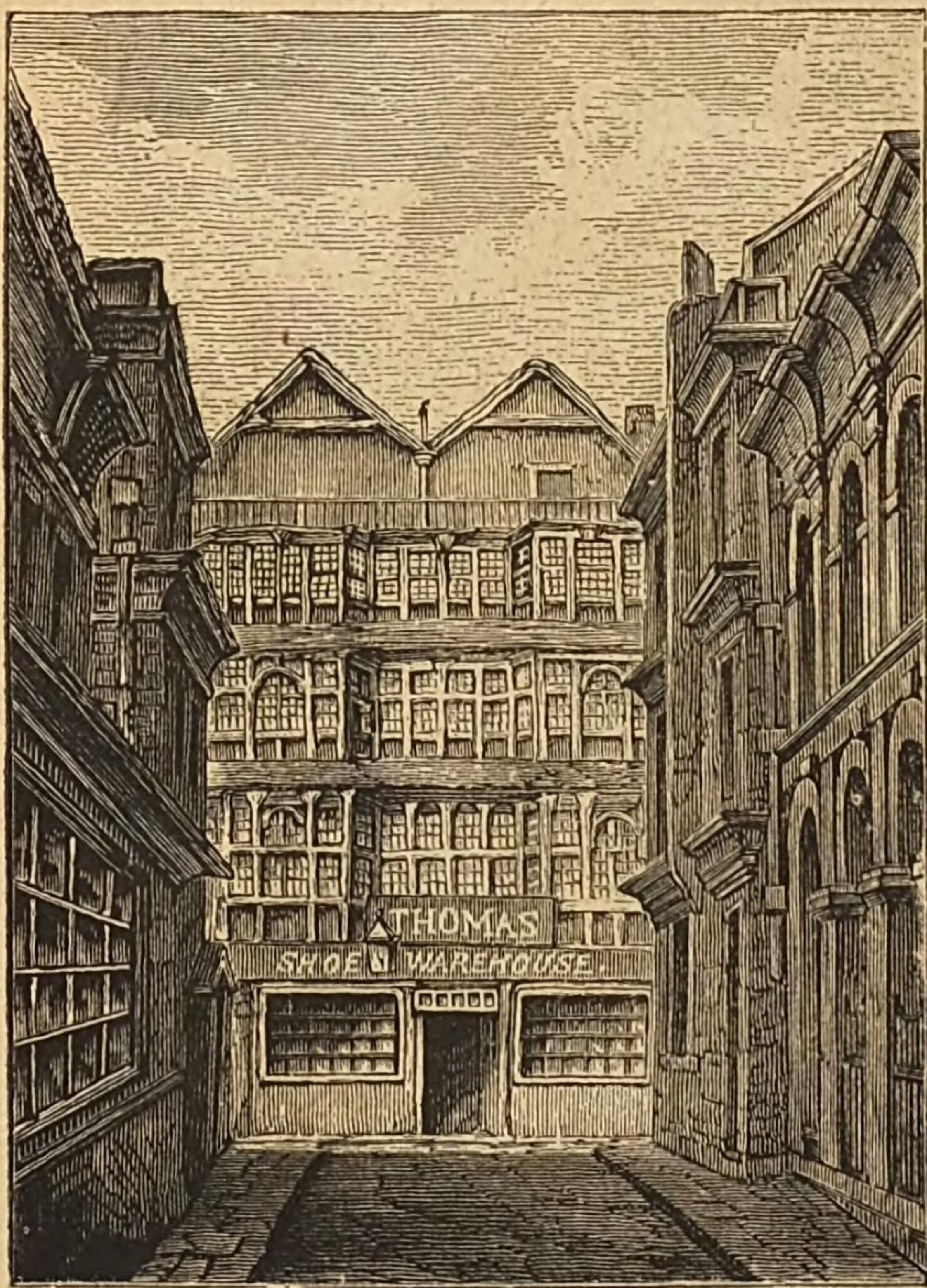


BRISTOL STREETS. FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

plucky folk in the year 1314, which for two years kept all the mighty forces of coercion and punishment sent against them by the tyrant king, at respectful distance. For these two years Bristol was, to all bad intents and purposes, an independent state, making and executing its own laws and malefactors, collecting and expending its own and other people's revenues, and united in defiance of King Edward II. and in defence of themselves. It was but a question of customs and tolls—but the pocket has eye

been the pulse of human action. Enough for our purpose that the imposts were impositions; and it is with feelings of pride that I chronicle the brave stand made by these erstwhile loyal citizens against autocracy. A force of 20,000 men, under the Earl of Gloucester, was sent against the city, but it was no remedy—force never has been. Bristol would not be reduced to obedience, when it spelt serfdom. A second attempt was made. The city was surrounded by land and sea, and after a stern and stubborn resistance, surrendered to the king—but on easy terms, and paid its lowly fine of submission on the weekly hire system.

Having become accustomed to the feeling, the town went in for a perfect series of besiegings. In 1326 Queen Isabella tried her hand at it, from the outside. With that



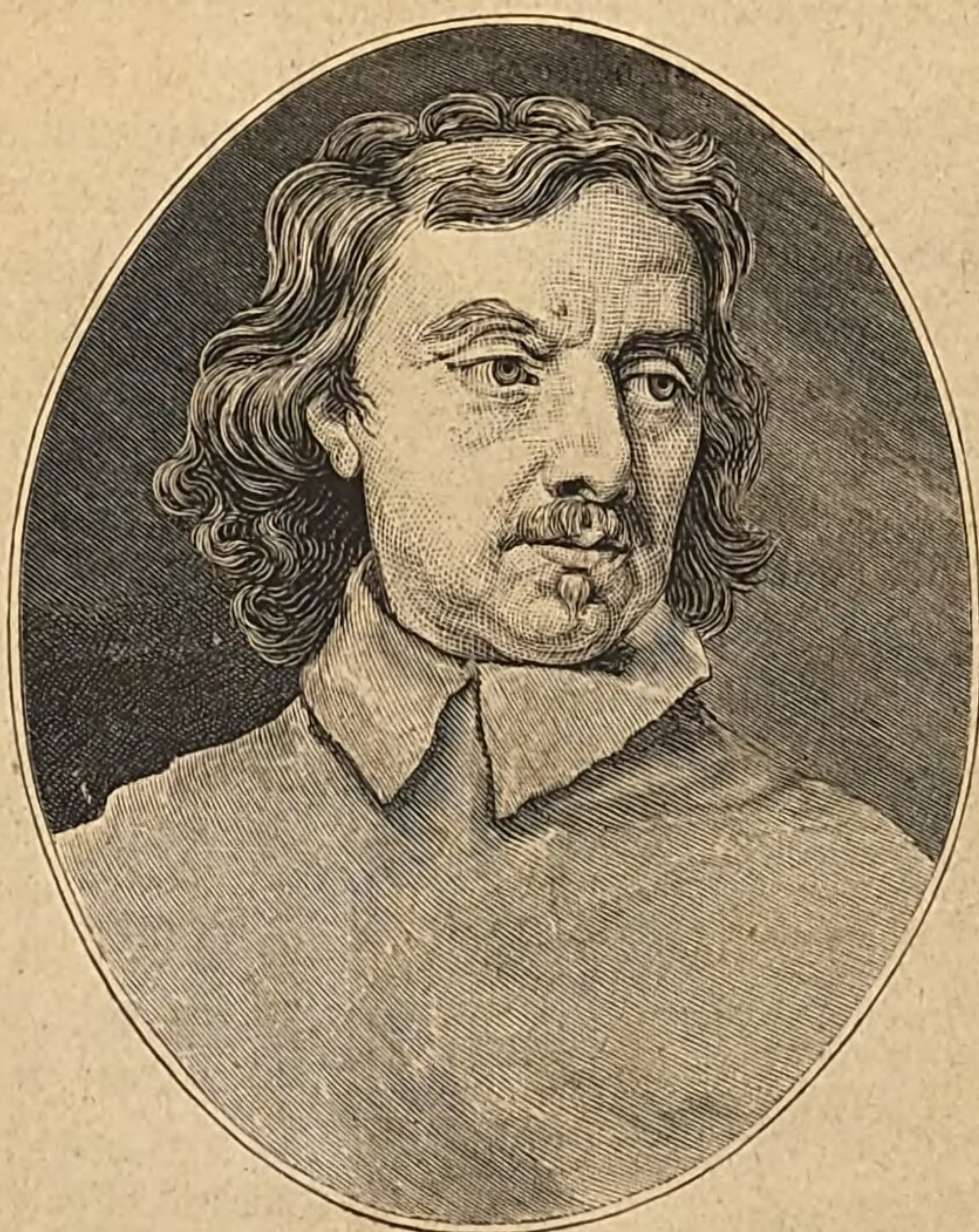
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY HOUSE.

true chivalry which has always characterised its inhabitants, they did not keep the lady knocking outside for long, but admitted her. But the bird, in the person of the fortunate gentleman, her husband, had flown. The maritime position of Bristol at this period is shown in the record of the fleet brought together by Edward III. for the "colonisation" of Calais. It provided twenty-three ships as against London's—then, as always, the premier port—twenty-five, and 608 men, as against the latter's 662; which was a good muster as "seconds" go. There was a plaguey outbreak in 1348; but on the whole the city shared largely in the prosperity of the country which characterised the reign of the third Edward. Shipping increased, and the manufacture of woollen cloth was firmly established. This industry obtained such status, that in this reign the

weavers were permitted to elect four of the city aldermen. They had the funniest possible conceptions in those days of the suitability of rewards.

Richard II. paid Bristol a visit in 1387, and amicably took up his quarters in the castle. The second visit with which he honoured it, in 1398, was on a large scale—at the head of an army which he was conducting on a circular tour through Ireland. When he had gone on his way rejoicing, Henry of Bolingbroke turned up at the head of 100,000 men, seized the town, and besieged the castle. About this time I am made acquainted with the vigorous existence of the greatest merchant of his time and country.

The name of William Canynge the Younger, five times Mayor of Bristol, twice its Member of Parliament, owner of fleets, and entertainer of Royalty, is one to conjure with and up recollections of the period when he made Bristol famous as mart and port the wide world over. Almost contemporaneous with this is the name of the greatest home-bred navigator of these islands—Sebastian Cabot—the man who discovered America in 1497, on board the good ship *Matthew*. It pains me to admit the fact contained in the last sentence, but truth compels me to differ from the generally accepted opinion, even if I be deemed unjust to the memory of my great progenitor. In 1542 Bristol was made a see; an instance of



Yours Oliver Cornwell.

clerical foresight. Unlike good wine, it needed and obtained Paul Bush for its first Bishop. In 1574 enter Queen Elizabeth into Bristol. Cost: £1,053 14s. 11d. I don't half like writing down that elevenpence. But so it is inscribed, and a faithful scribe must even record accordingly. In 1641 came the great tug of war, which took in tow Bristol, as it did the rest of the kingdom. In this year the city definitely took sides with the Parliament in its struggle with the scoundrelly king. The city was put into a state of complete defence. But later on, the instability of the times was reflected in the conduct of the citizens, who shifted their front—and sides, and became the king's. It is true that opinion in Bristol was about equally divided, but this decisive course no doubt represented the particular views of the aldermen, who, in those rude times, had an unequal share in

local rule, and represented—themselves and their own interests. In due course opinion changed again in favour of the Parliament, and Colonel Essex, who was in charge of the Puritan forces, was admitted, with his party, into the city. On July 24th the city was attacked by the Royalists. For two days the fiercest of conflicts raged, and Bristol was carried by assault and the enemy's battery. Bristol was the key to the West of England, and a deadlock was removed from the plans of the Royalists by its capture.

Then the famous recovery of the city by Cromwell on September 10th, by which it may be truly said the inhabitants were very much taken back. Cromwell was always closely associated with the city, and was its Lord High Steward from 1651 till his death in 1658. He ordered the demolition of the castle at Bristol on the 21st December, 1654, as



BRISTOL STREETS. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

at many other places, the great Protector holding that such strongholds were the weaknesses of liberty and equality. In 1658 Lord Richard Cromwell visited the city, bringing with him his wife and a liking for good wine, the latter of which the gladsome folk of Bristol provided in plenty. In 1660 "coffee houses," where "tee" was sold, were first opened in Bristol. In 1689, several rises were taken out of the inhabitants by the unusual course of earthquake shocks, a most upsetting incident. On February 5th, 1695, the first Bristol fresh-water company was formed. But the people were conservative in their tastes, and looked upon its introduction unfavourably. So the company failed for want of custom. Queen Anne visited the city on the 1st September, 1702—as is, I believe, well known,

she has since died. I am not drawing any inferences from the two totally distinct episodes in that lady's life. I am simply stating historical facts. In 1756 a survey of the city credited it with containing 13,000 houses and 90,000 inhabitants. Bristol Bridge was rebuilt and opened in 1765. In 1776 Doctor Johnson and his friend Boswell visited Bristol. I think I had best, at this time and place, make an incursion into the next century.



UP ANOTHER BRISTOL STREET. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER III.

I FIND a distinct advantage in dealing with the affairs of the nineteenth century. It is the only one in which, as yet, I have had the opportunity of living. So to some extent my conclusions are no longer the ends of historical data, but the effects of a personal acquaintance with the period treated. A surprising amount of reliance can in consequence be based upon all I may henceforth say of the lost city and its people.

In the beginning of the century the commercial prosperity of Bristol was a for-some-time-established fact. Vast amounts of wealthy trading with the West Indies, and the profitable dealings with the wool and wine growers of Spain, helped to raise the old port to an undoubted pride of place. But the effect of northern enterprise was already doing much to deprive Bristol of its accustomed position, and the crass stupidity and indifference of the city's wealthy merchants did the rest. In amassing lucre the citizens had parted with enterprise, and the Mersey was fast taking from Bristol what should never have been another's. The selfishness and indolence of the time took into no account the competition in woollen goods with Yorkshire, it did not recognise the advantages of cotton spinning, though Lancashire was there with its wonderful lesson, and nothing was done to make the Avon less of a Serpentiney labyrinth than Nature had playfully intentioned it. The city was already like to die from too great a prosperity, and its "lost" condition was even then foretold. But a truce to these somewhat unsatisfactory ruminations, and let me continue my catalogue of Bristolian achievements and shortcomings.

In 1801—the census. The very first. It was a time of upsetting statistics and custom-honoured beliefs. To many it was also a period of sacrilege and sin, for it was surely wrong "to number the people." As far as Bristol was concerned, the result was disappointing. There had been quite an erroneous consensus of opinion as to the size of the city. The figures told only of a population between 60,000 and 70,000.

In the year 1804 an extraordinary local engineering effort was successfully floated. This was nothing less than the provision of a floating-harbour for the city. Eighty-two acres of dock accommodation in the heart of Bristol were worth all the time, the trouble, and the money their acquisition entailed. It gave a new bed to the Avon, and a resting-place to the shipping of all nations. The first sod was turned on the 1st of May, at five o'clock in the morning. This testifies to the late hours kept by these beginning-of-the-centurians. In 1807 the then Prince of Wales visited the city. Cost—£1,225. Here also came the Duke of Wellington, in 1816. Cost—£925 17s. From this one can calculate the approximate value—for feasting purposes—of the Royal Prince and the great man. Bristolians had for some time been consigned to Bath—by steamer—in place of the old-

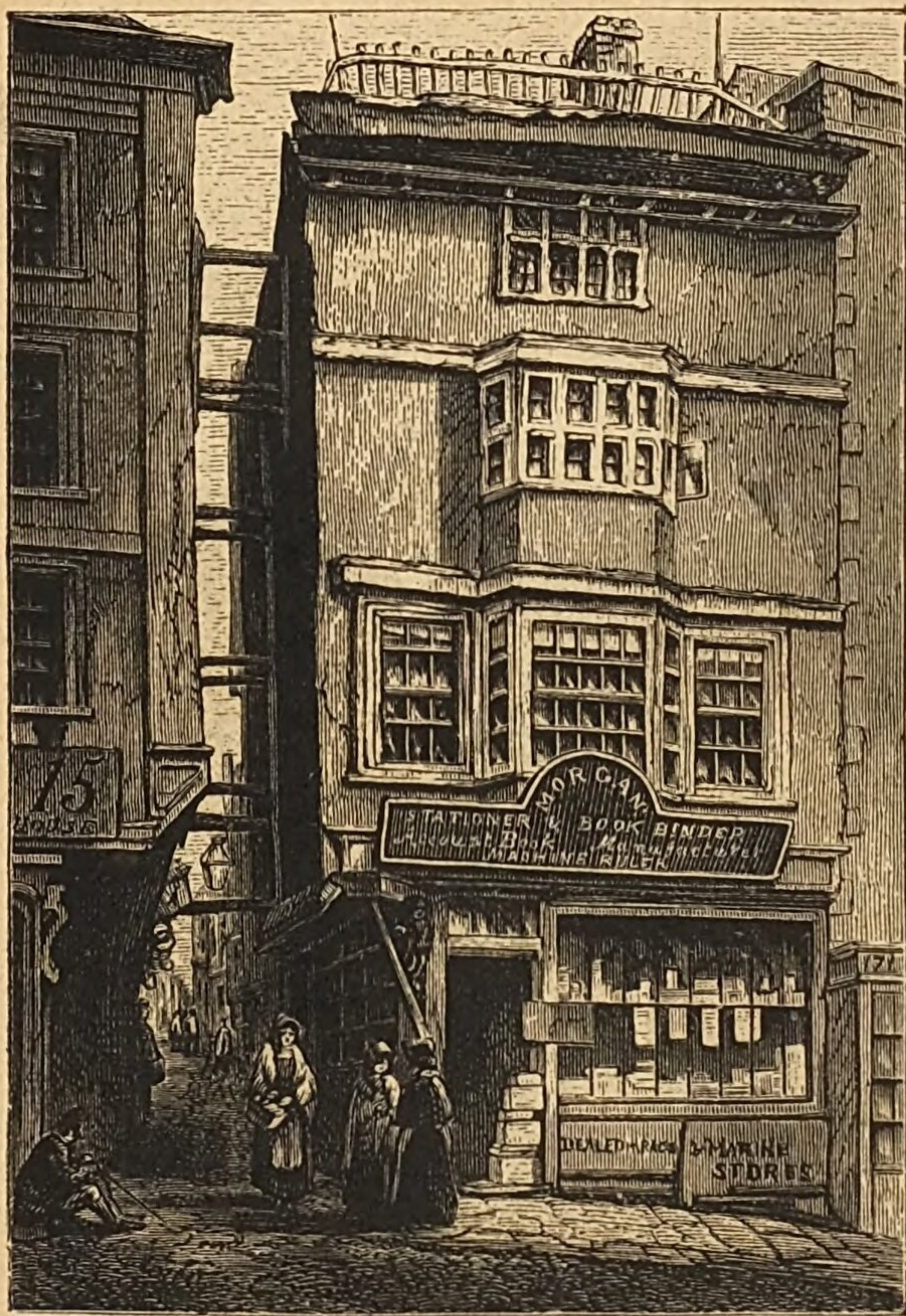
fashioned word of mouth. The first steam vessel seen in Bristol appeared in the Float in June, 1813, and trafficked between the two Avonly cities. The slowness which was even at that time speedily becoming characteristic of the city, was strikingly exemplified by its attitude towards steam-tugs. Although the improved system of haulage was in use in



A BIT OF BROADMEAD. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

most great English rivers, the Avon still was dependent upon horse-power. It was not till 1836 that the first steam-tug was allowed to ply upon the river. And the Avon had in the meantime lost favour in the sight of shipowners and merchants. In 1827 a new drawbridge was opened, and, though my well-regulated pen hesitates to record it, the ceremony took place on a Sunday. Shades of Bristolian righteousness! How was this?

In 1859 a proposal was made for the construction of a suspension bridge across the Avon at Clifton. The work was started upon designs furnished by Mr. Brunel—and never finished—from them. In the autumn of 1830 the Duchess of Kent and her daughter, the then Princess Victoria, visited Bristol, taking up their quarters at Clifton. There was no castle. The census of 1831 showed a population of 103,886—the first authentic record which gave the city credit for over one hundred thousand inhabitants. The way this and other



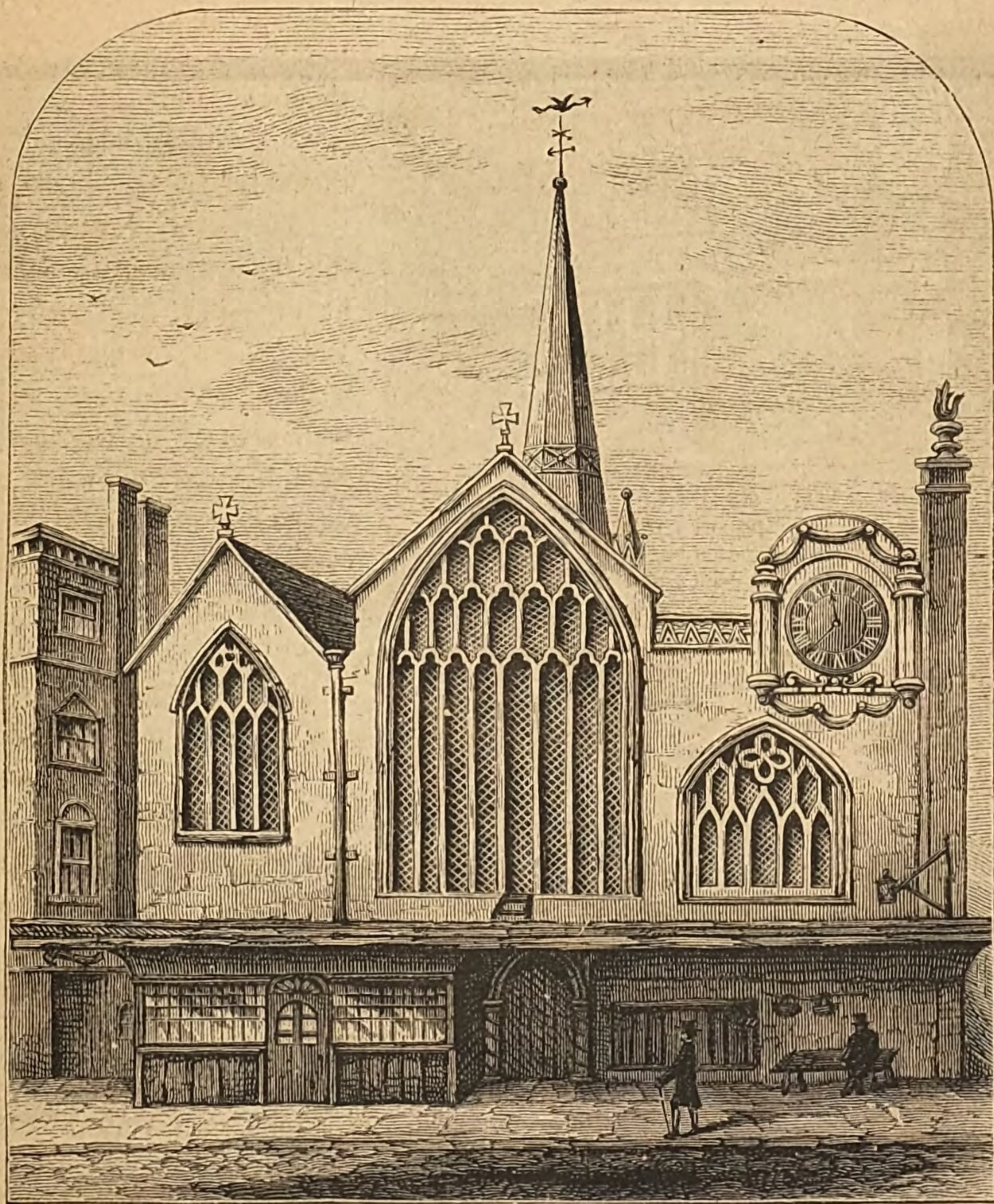
BYWAYS AND PATHWAYS. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

censuses have made some historians liars for a few dozen thousand ordinary people or so is astoundingly audacious. And then—the riots.

This lively row gave Bristol the biggest advertisement in its history. In fact, had not the well-known antipathy to such modern methods of mercantile malpractising on the part of the Bristolian been equally an historical fact, the one I am about to deal with might honestly have been put down to a desire to earn an unwelcome publicity. But—unlike the riots themselves—I can easily put them down to more legitimate and accidental causes. Arising from a justifiable objection to the acts of an unjustifiably incompetent recorder—Sir Charles Wetherell—what began as a popular outbreak of annoyance ended in the most senseless, purposeless, useless of

broils on a big scale, in English history. Given the necessary mob and scene of operations, the authorities, which an all-seeing Providence had in His anger chosen to inflict upon Bristol, gave away the rest—and themselves. Such incapacity as was shown in case of real need by the local magistrates and magnates is almost inconceivable. The wrong thing was done, whenever it was possible, by the authorities who were there to do the right thing. And from Saturday, the 29th October, 1831, till the 3rd or 4th of November, the city of Bristol was given over to the scenes always associated with the sack and pillage of hostile cities in times of war. The houses of the wealthy were looted and burned; the Mansion House wrecked; the gaol stormed, and its inmates freed; the Custom House sacked; shipping fired; and havoc and supineness reigned supreme. When the tardy action of the military

eventually restored order to a devastated city, recrimination and punishment had their turn, and, as is usual, the rioters were, when possible, suitably punished by the irresponsible magistracy. The city had the pleasure of paying in compensation for damage done to property between £60,000 and £70,000, and ever afterwards elected its mayors and its magistrates solely upon the score of their fitness, and not of their



CHRIST CHURCH. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

politics or money-bags. At least—so I have been informed. And a historian must not question too closely the authenticity of his information, or the writing of history would be impossible—for lack of material.

The year 1833 saw the initial proposals which culminated in the construction of a railway to London. It owed its inception and propagation to the public-spiritedness of a few Bristol citizens. The prospects which this iron connecting-link with the

metropolis held out were such as to inspire another Bristol gentleman, Mr. T. R. Guppy, with the idea of establishing a service between the city and that land across the Atlantic which Bristol had discovered. The undertaking of constructing the first transatlantic steamship was of a purely local character. The fact that Bristol failed to keep the advantages of establishing the first ocean traffic with America, is as purely local in character. The *Great Western* crossed the Atlantic, and returned to Bristol



THE "GREAT WESTERN."

in such splendid fashion as to demonstrate to all but the Bristol people the great importance of establishing without delay some such regular communication between the two countries. But what was Bristol's laggardness was Liverpool's opportunity. When the success of the *Great Western's* voyage had been established, the enterprising Liverpoolians laid down four similar ships with all possible speed, and were ready with the necessary means of ocean conveyance directly the public began to clamour

for it. It will scarcely be believed that nothing to supplement the *Great Western* was proceeded with until late in the following year. And then, with characteristic absurdity, the company upon whom this heavy responsibility lies, went in for experiments. And by the time the great rival port in the north was ready with a line of manageable ocean steamers, this company had embarked upon the construction of a single ship, which was to be three times the size of the *Great Western*, and to be the medium of the extraordinary gymnastic inventions of that arch-engineering fiend—Brunel. It took over four years to build this monument of criminal incapacity, unfavourably known as the *Great Britain*. By this time Liverpool had asserted itself; and Bristol as a competitive port for the Atlantic trade, despite its advantages of time



VIEW OF BRISTOL DOCKS.

and space, was impossible. Without wishing to touch upon the unpleasant associations of these primitive Atlantic crossings, I may fittingly add here—

Sic (?) transit gloria mundi!

Up to the year 1836 Bristol had participated in all the advantages accruing from the possession of a whole bishop. But the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were on reform bent, and straightway proceeded to counteract the effect of existing anomalies, by creating fresh ones. So the sees of Bristol and Gloucester were assimilated, and a full share in half a bishop was in future the lot of the Bristolian. On the 21st of March, 1843, died a great son of Bristol, Robert Southey, poet and discoverer—of the beauties of our Cumberland Lakes. Son of a Bristol draper, he received his early education in the city, and died out of it. Another gifted Bristolian, William James Müller, who

sought and found fame on many a field of canvas, died on the 8th of September, 1845. In the following year, Bristol Docks were purchased by the Corporation. The ostensible object of this was to save the port from the exactions of the Dock Company, which were fast becoming unsupportable. History does not record if the changing of the old order of things accomplished the objects which called the change into being. In 1849 a vigorous effort was made by the council for the cleansing of the citizens. Several baths and wash-houses were opened in different parts of the city, and all failed to be self-supporting. So in spite of its half-bishop and its multitude of churches, Bristol bade fair at that time to dispute the truth of the old adage anent cleanliness and godliness. The state of Bristol altogether at this period was, from a sanitary point of view, well—imperfect. The mortality averaged 31 per 1,000. Many parts of the city were without sewage; those that were, found the adjacent harbour most convenient. Very few houses had their own supply of water. Most of the city depended upon wells, which, well—was not well. Bristol was verily a city of stench, which vied with each other in their villainously pestilential malodorousness. The From, which ran through the city, was so stagnant, that it could not turn a wheel. It turned stomachs. So King Cholera visited the city in 1850. But the cost was greater than any of the many Royal visitations with which Bristol had previously been favoured. This woke up the authorities, and something was done towards making Bristol other than a place for hoarding-up and resting on money made by trade. There was a census in 1851. Population—137,328.

In 1855 the increase of lunatics was made appallingly apparent to the authorities, who, of course, were in a specially advantageous position for noticing any such incident. A commodious Asylum, more in accordance with the dignity of the city and the local laws of supply and demand, was erected, at a cost of over £40,000. The institution became very popular, and as increased accommodation was regularly provided as the demand for it manifested itself, the need of improving the miserably inadequate Council House was not felt to be so pressing.

The Queen, accompanied by the Prince Consort and many of her children, passed through Bristol on August 15th, 1856. The Royal party stayed some twenty minutes in the railway refreshment rooms. I have formulated many theories in connection with this incident, but have come to the conclusion that I had best keep them all stored in the recesses of my receptive cerebrum. But it was a long wait. In 1860 the subject of the unfinished Suspension Bridge again came to the front. A project for carrying out the original idea, with modifications, was decided upon, and in 1864 the bridge was opened. In 1861—the census. Population of Bristol and its suburbs: 154,093.

I think I have epitomised enough to demonstrate that Bristol must have been a very unhappy place, for, of a surety, it was possessed of an unconscionable amount of history. The present generation of non-Bristolians has little by little become unaccustomed to its existence. That the city had got lost was not thought to be within the range of practical possibilities. But anxious inquiries from without became daily more pressing. The responsibility of keeping more or less in touch with this real bit of Old England, with

its glorious traditions, its breezy career, and its extraordinary incapacity to maintain its place or its advantages, became greater and greater; the necessity of learning the truth, more urgent. Which brings me to that momentous advertisement, which was not only to be responsible for all that is yet to come, but called into being all that the reader must have hitherto gone through.

* * * * *

Raising myself to my full height, and gazing upon the portrait of an illustrious namesake the while I did it, I swore—record of the actual words is not necessary to this history—that Bristol should be found, and that its enemies should by the finding of it be much confounded. And I kept my swear.

PART II.

DISCOVERIES.

CHAPTER I.

ON ARRIVAL.

I HAD sworn inwardly—the more approved of the two methods—to find Bristol ; and I did. It is purely from a desire to be original that I do not initiate my readers into the secret of how it was done. All my illustrious predecessors found things and places with an uninteresting sameness of procedure. They embarked in ships—as a rule—and sailed away, sometimes trusting to Providence, sometimes to chance. There would be a storm, and a retched passage for the bold discoverers would result from this chance visitation. But ultimately, they would be cast willy-nilly upon some unknown coast, to the consternation of the bare-backed natives and to their own salvation. There was nothing to prevent my undergoing the same experiences. Bristol had to be discovered, and that and every other conceivable method were open to me, at the close of the last chapter. But I *mal*-demurred to the sea voyage.

But apart from my bid for originality in thus steering a straight course in another direction, I am saved—and so are my readers—from that *reductio ad absurdum*—the account of a long maritime experience by an unseasalted land-lubber. The sea has always been the most over-rated thing on earth. Its sickly beauties, whether seen or read of, have always set me ruminating in silent agony upon the unhealthily convalescent state of those strangely-constituted persons who extol its saving qualities. I have been forestalled in remarking that if Britannia ruled the waves it was a pity that she did not rule them straighter. But I am not too late to characterise the indecent glorification of the watery elements as a great wave of unjustifiable booming. Most people are unfortunate in something. It may be love, or marriage, or things equally different. I have always been so in my sea, which I have never known as poets and other afflicted persons have. So to return to Bristol, I have but to mention that I got there. But the how and the way are matters I am not bound to discuss with every person who has two-and-sixpence to spend.

The first thing I did on arrival was to telegraph the glad tidings to the advertisers for its recovery, and to receive with something like consternation their reply—which I append :

“ *To Lesser Columbus, Bristol. Wire received. Proof wanted. Full particulars about place and people necessary before any reward paid. Ascertain cause of strange disappearance—formulate your conclusions—and report.*”

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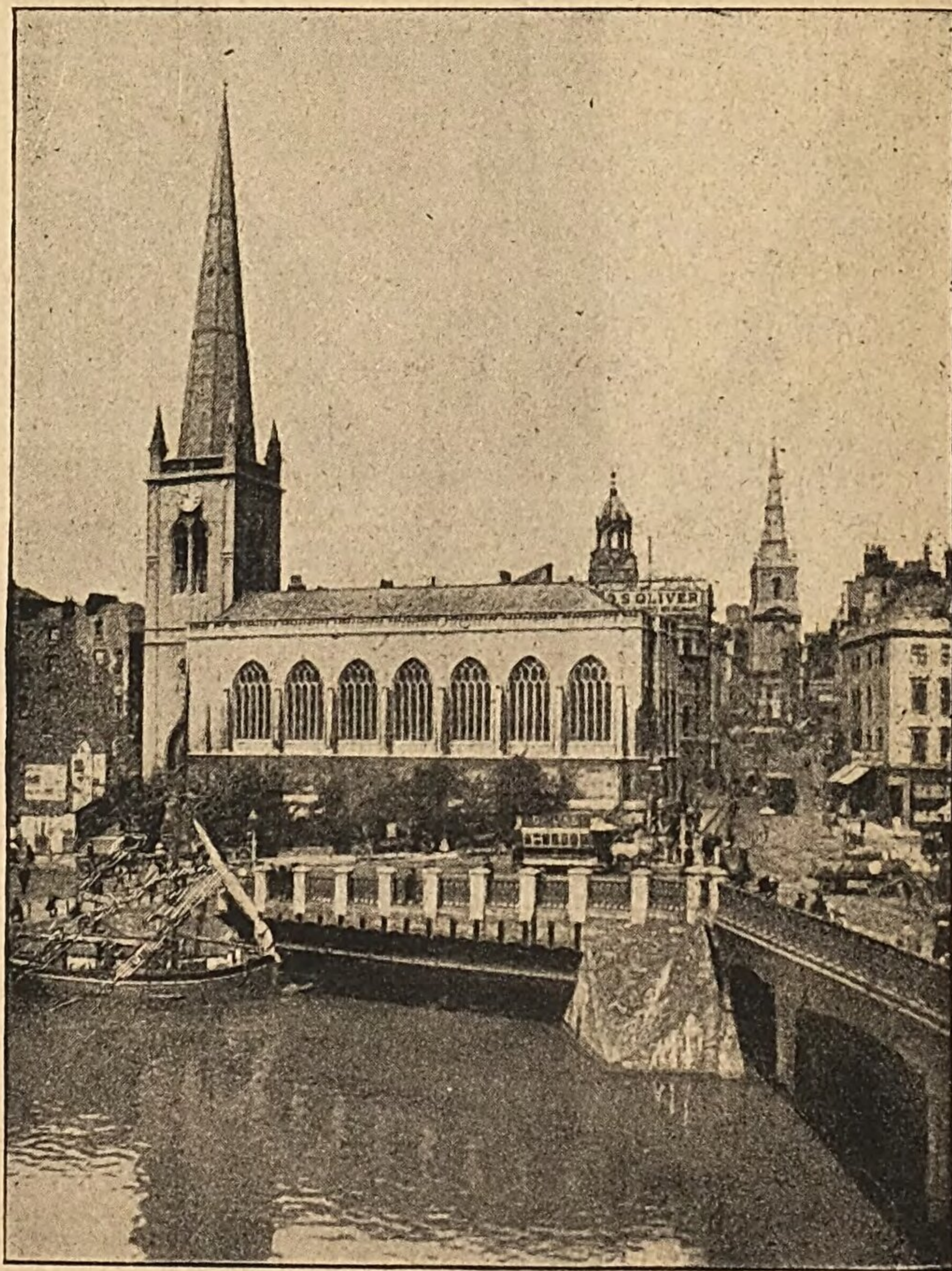
[Publisher's Mem.:] As is well known, Mr. Columbus remained for some time in the City of Bristol, and in due course furnished his report to the authorities. It is our, we trust, good fortune—obtained by right of purchase—to publish this report *in extenso*, as compiled by Mr. Columbus. The original MS., which is in our possession, can be viewed at our offices on any week-day after 6 o'clock p.m., and on Saturdays after 2 p.m., on presentation of medical certificate.

CHAPTER II.

ON ELYSIUM AND HADES.

I WAS much struck with the general indifference shown by the citizens of this city to the importance of its discovery. I gleefully conveyed the glad tidings to certain of them shortly after my advent upon the scene. But when a wondering stare was not the only response vouchsafed to my congratulations, the remarks passed were not of a character that any respectable letter-press would care to be set-up about. But, as will be gathered, the citizens of Bristol differ from other folk in many ways.

The city may be said to have its centre about Bristol Bridge. Round here, the busiest part of Bristol is gathered. Victoria Street has its commencement here: and Victoria Street is the main street. It leads to the Joint Railway Station, and the unexplored regions of a brick and mortar wilderness on the other side of Bath Bridge, yclept Totter-

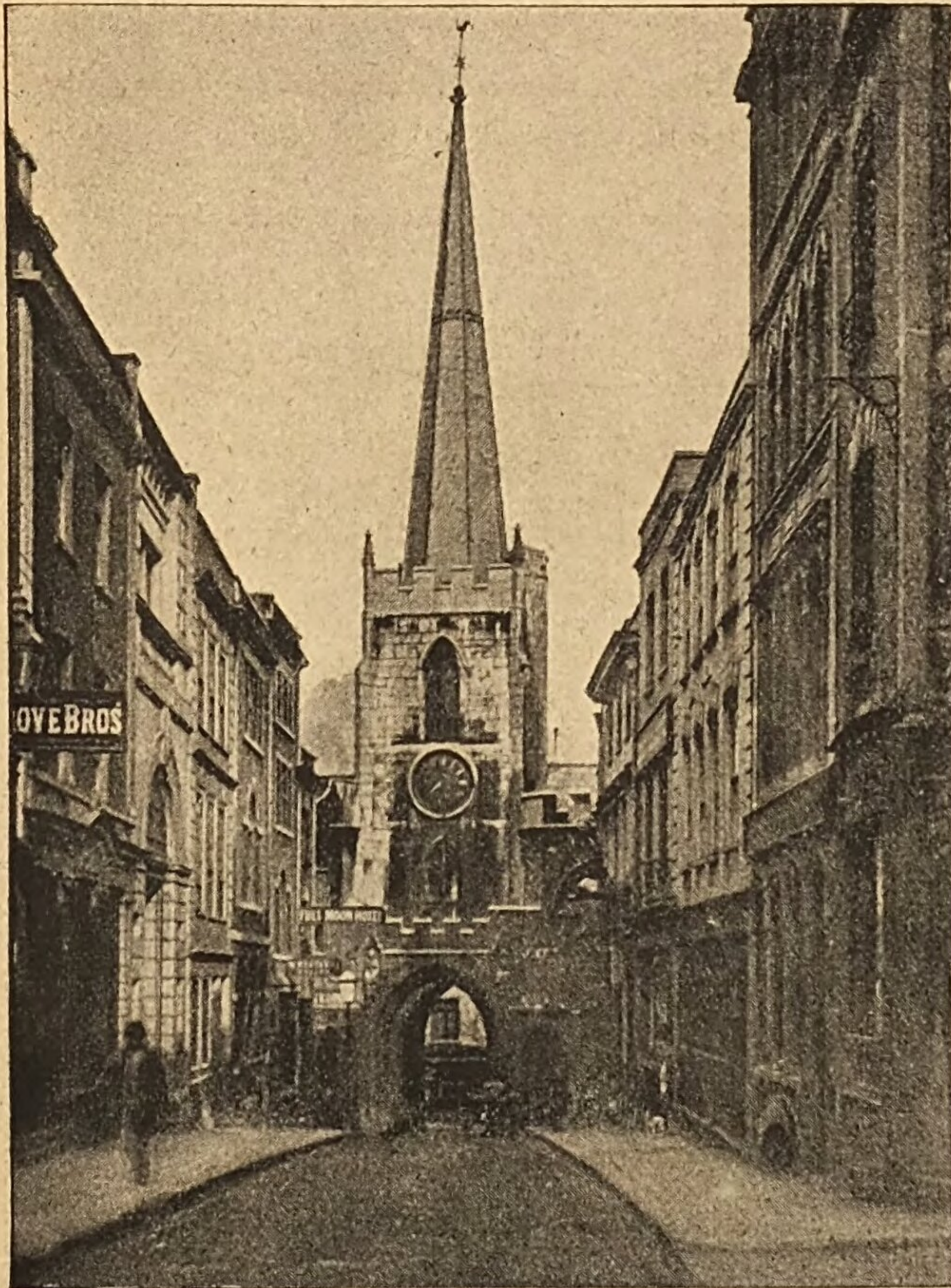


ON BRISTOL BRIDGE.

down. The view from Bristol Bridge commands a big stretch of the floating-harbour, in which the strange and somewhat Hollandish sight of many masted vessels drawn

up alongside the thoroughfares is presented. This from a scenic point of view has its advantages, and forms a pretty enough picture. Other senses are not so gratified. The authorities might see fit one of these days to supply some water to the floating-harbour. One can have too much of liquid mud when it smells as it does about Bristol Bridge.

Broad Street and Baldwin Street, each of which is a main artery, have their beginning here, but have nothing else in common. Broad Street is, like most of Bristol proper, most improperly built. It is one of a labyrinth of narrow lanes, which demonstrate nothing more than the forethought of their designers, who presumably considered the crossing of



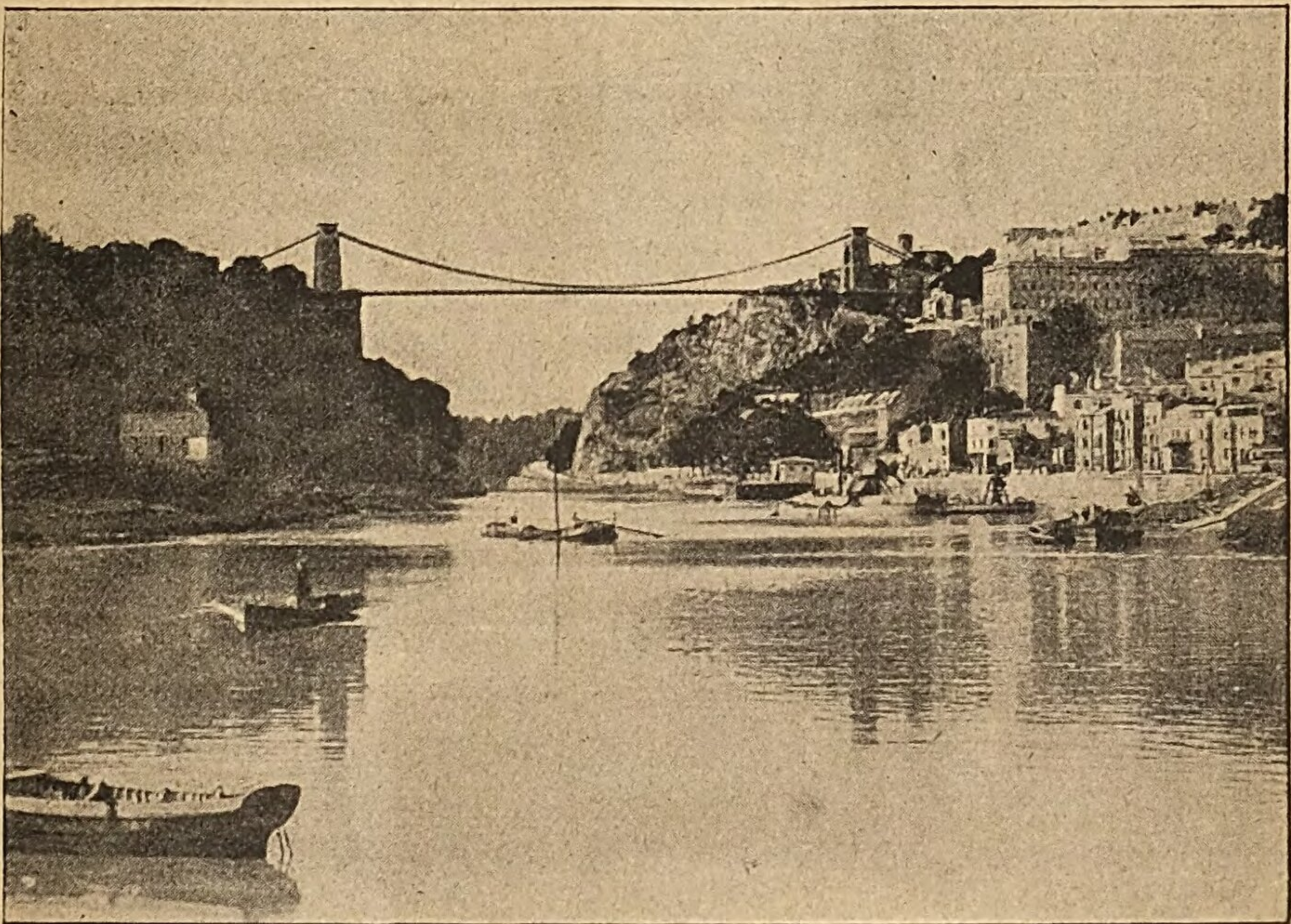
BROAD STREET.

the roadway for the purpose of hand-shaking undesirable. At its other end, the quaint old-world church-tower of St. John's semi-blocks the way. You pass through its archways and enter another part of Bristol, which has nothing of greater interest than its police station and its great boot manufactories to offer for notice. Baldwin Street is a taste of the newer and wider sphere of local municipal spirit. It is a fine wide thoroughfare, possessing many substantial buildings and more un-built-on sites. To walk its length is to come to the drawbridge, where and thereabouts will be soon seen completed the greatest street improvement the city has yet undertaken. Here also Corn Street—a fashionable but narrow

pathway—finds a terminus. On the other side of the drawbridge is the winding alpine roadway which is called St. Augustine's Parade, which will eventually bring the breathless pedestrian right through Park Street. This district provides the fashionable business promenade of the city. For in Bristol there are many promenaders, fairly divided sexually, "who toil not, neither do they spin," who wear nice clothes, look critically into the shop-windows—and at one another. When these dizzy slopes are scaled, the road to Clifton is both easy and pleasant.

Bristol is a city of extremes. Extreme simplicity and extreme self-satisfaction. When it is not hill, it is dale; when it is not filthily dirty, it is superlatively clean; you pass from out a labyrinth of decayed and tumble-down ramshackledom, into the magnificent spaces of the beautifully-wooded and stone-built villadom of its perfectly unsurpassable suburbs. Nothing could well be viler than the neighbourhood of its quays, or the condition of certain residential quarters of the older portions of the city. Whereas the task of describing the matchless beauties of Clifton is far beyond the powers of my un-poetic pen.

To this wonderful Clifton, and its surroundings, and its bridge, I should like to pay a passing tribute. This is voluntary, with the exception of the bridge, which, in



AN AVON-LY VIEW.

spite of its well-deserved fame—is not ex-tolled. Surely no other city in Europe has such veritable gardens of delight within its immediate vicinity, as Bristol! Where else but in Clifton can be seen such grand stretches of green sward, encompassed by foliage in its most luxuriant forms? The “Downs,” whence I took many a never-to-be-forgotten bird’s-eye-view of the countless beauties of the surrounding country, are some hundreds of feet above the murky, waterless river which flows its slimy, muddy way beneath, traversing the great limestone gorge formed by the highest inland rocks in England—with the exception of those at Cheddar—from whose moss-grown precipitous heights you espy the symmetrically balanced crescents and squares of beautiful houses and mansions which crown the brows of the surrounding hills, and break the vision of extreme luxuriance of magnificent verdure which has made this scene the most entrancing in Europe. What more exhilarating than the view from this point of vantage, with

hill and meadow on every side, vying with each other for the pride of beauty place! And right before one stretches the slender length of the great suspension bridge, whose dizzy height has tempted so many tired ones to essay the biggest of big journeys.

On this beautiful Clifton Down there are points of interest to enumerate which would take up more open space than I can give. They are not surpassed in England for variety and attractiveness. Encircling the higher portion of the Down—which is the best-looking plain I have ever seen—there are the remains of an old British fortress. On the rock beneath there is an historic old chapel. The surrounding scenery includes the glorious Leigh woods, and the views of the Somersetshire hills; and the peeps at the Bristol



PROMENADE, CLIFTON.

Channel and the Welsh mountains form a general scenic effect that must be seen to be appreciated—a never-to-be-forgotten chapter in a man's life.

When you walk round Clifton you will notice trees, flowers, grass, and churches in abundance. Here and there, scattered among the steep and steeped edifices, are to be seen pretty detached villas and neat stone houses, which demonstrate that church-going, sight-seeing, and *felo-de-se-ing* are not the only uses this lovely suburb is put to. For there is a mighty advantage in living in Bristol, if only for the opportunity afforded of residing out of it. All those who can afford it make Clifton their resting-place. And only those who cannot understand what it means to be within a quarter of an hour's walk of a big busy city, with all its crowd of commercial and other unpleasant associations, and yet in the fairest of country, with all the advantages of not really living in the country—only

those I say, could find it within them to say to the aspiring—and eventually perspiring—Bristolian—“Thus high shall you climb, but no higher.”

Clifton is not only beautiful—it is fashionable. In the eyes of the Cliftonian there is as much difference between him—and his wife and daughters—and the people who do not live in Clifton, as there *may* be between Cliftonians and the angels. The resident in Clifton, from the height of the great gorge on which he has built his villa residence, looks down upon the lowly Bristolian in a way calculated to make the gorge of the latter rise proportionately. He has shown his superiority by choosing to live in Clifton, and recognises Bristol only as a sort of daily purgatory into which he descends for mere commercial considerations.

And it must be admitted that there are parts of Bristol which to some extent justify a belief in *post-mortem* punishment.

Clifton has all the aspects of a separate town—as far as fine streets, handsome shops, and a specially high tariff for everything justify such a status. You literally breathe another atmosphere when in Clifton, which, if it were only in Germany, would be the most famous of Spas. Excellent mineral waters are obtained from all the wells which the vicinity is heir to, and its supply of bath-chairs has been arranged upon the most liberal scale. It is a favourite resort of unmarried ladies of matured single experience. It possesses the prettiest of zoological gardens, with excellent accommodation for both bird and beast. These grounds are furnished with a lively and well-chosen selection of—from a Cliftonian's point of view—alien inhabitants.

Lions, tigers, elephants, zebras, camels, kangaroos, snakes, eagles, bears, and a perfect host of differently haired and plumaged specimens of Nature's handiwork, assorted, all claim the attention of the visitor—who is requested neither to touch the animals nor to walk on the grass. The grounds are very pretty, well planned and planted. In the season, open-air concerts, galas with firework accompaniments, and a skating rink, here help the Cliftonian's lazy leisure hours to slide along. Clifton is altogether a charming place in which to reside, for those unhealthy persons who, before everything else, desire a quiet and lengthy life.



HANNIBAL II.—ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

And then—the other extreme. There are parts of Bristol visited by me which bear witness with silent but all-powerful testimony to its sins of omission. I cannot imagine worse, more flagrant instances of over-crowding in its most reprehensible forms, than these parts furnished. Thousands of miserable poor are huddled in abjectest misery in some six hundred squalid courts, which presumably know not sanitary or other inspection. In these wretched lodgings — veritable vermin-ridden warrens — are herded a great proportion of the local undercrust. Thousands of others can boast no better home than that afforded by the tentative occupation of a common lodging-house, with which Bristol is unfortunately better supplied than with hotels. Of a certainty, Bristol is a many-hued-and-cried chameleon. Within a stone's throw of numbers of the stately factories which provide this city of merchant princes with the means to keep up their Clifton establishments, is a dreary heart-breaking background of the cankering sores of this other side of the great western city's claim for vigorous notice. I have seen in this rich, ultra-prosperous, ultra-contented abode of men, women, and aldermen, slums more hopeless in their hellishness, poverty more provoking in its persistency, more squalor, more filth, more despair due to the cruelty of existence, than I should have deemed possible in any Christian land. Nothing approaching it could find place in a heathen country. It may be drink—it generally is. But *it* — the herding together like pigs of thousands of human beings, minus, however, the aspirations of that useful animal for a different condition of things—is a stern reality, and a dreadful commentary upon the results of our civilisation and our humanity.

I do not contend that Bristol owns a monopoly of poverty-stricken slum life, and much that I have written could be equally appropriately applied to many other cities. But I doubt if such striking contrasts between the two great divisions of the human race—the haves and the have nots—are presented anywhere else so vividly as in Bristol. There they stand, side by side, for the observation of all those who care, or do not care, to look. And certainly no other English municipality has done so little towards ameliorating this un-social condition of things, as the one I am about to criticise.

CHAPTER III.

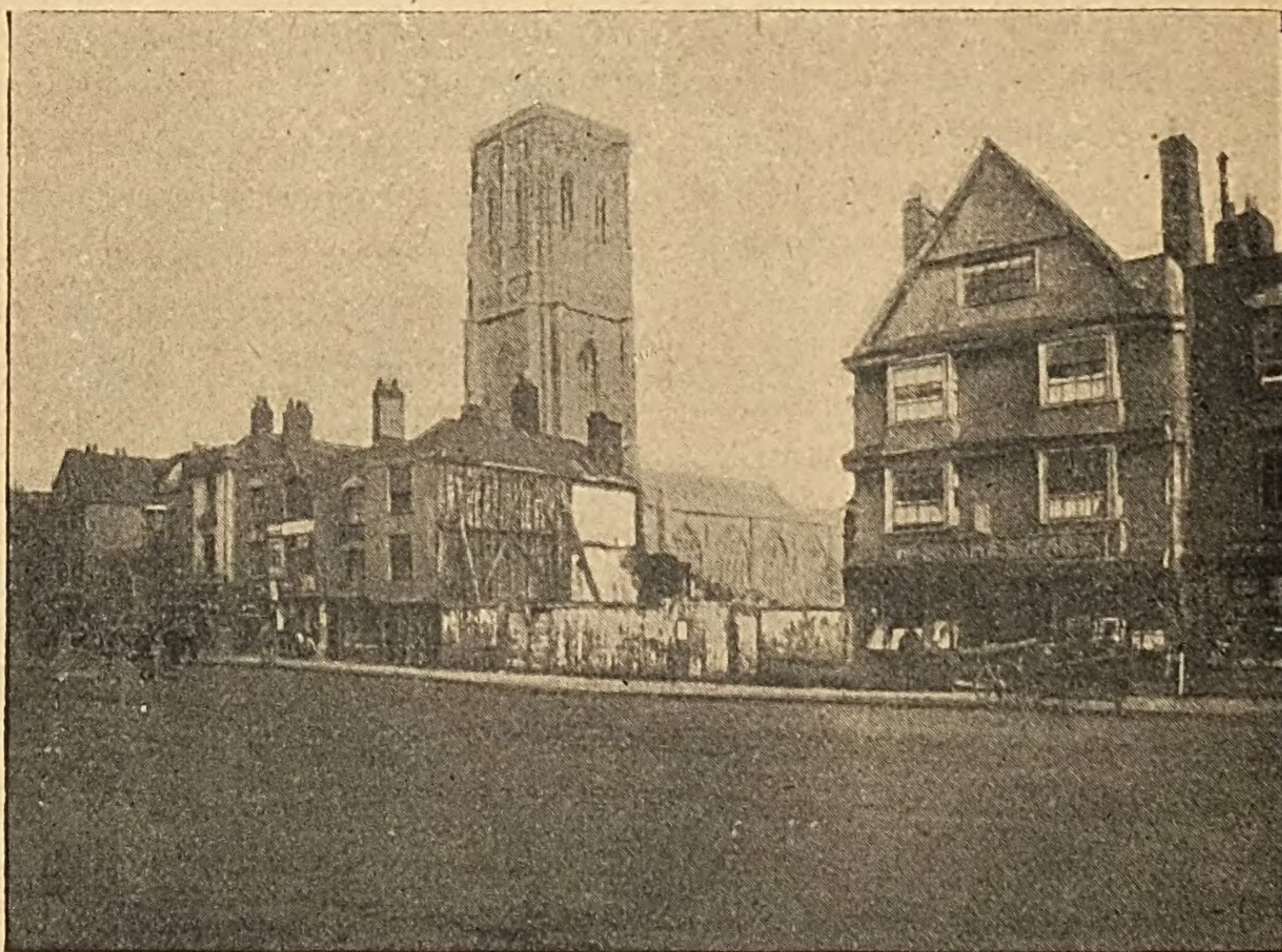
ON ALDERMEN.

MOST of the evils that Bristol is heir to are due to two causes. In the first place, the people have a natural and hereditary tendency to do as little as possible for themselves. The Gospel of *laissez-faire* is more widely inculcated into the life of the Bristolian than of any other person. His father did without certain things, and did—not do others. And what was good enough for the father, who had no doubt left his progeny a comfortable income amassed by such methods—or want of them—is surely good enough for the son. This succinctly explains the main cause for the reproach I must bring against the place—its backwardness. It is want of interest, not want of heart; for the Bristolian is a capital fellow. He does not like to interfere—and after all, things are best as they are, in this best of all possible worlds.

Secondly—like citizen, like Corporation. The Town Council of Bristol consists of sixteen aldermen and forty-eight Town Councillors. The Council meetings are presided over by the Mayor. The Mayor is the creation and nominee of a limited number of aldermen, chosen by the remainder, who labour under the *sobriquet* of the Warwick Committee, out of compliment to an Earl of Warwick, who was popularly supposed to make and unmake kings. The Mayoralty goes the round of the aldermen fairly regularly. But even aldermen are partly human—and they strike. On such occasions they hit upon the expedient of putting up a dummy Mayor—who is equally under their fingers and thumbs, but who need not be an alderman, or even a pronounced Tory. And here we have the ordinary composition of Bristol's municipality. United, it has done less for the city it misgoverns than any similar civic body. Most of the important towns in England own their own waterworks, supply their own gas—for illuminating purposes—run their own tramways. Bristol is the only large municipality in the country which allows all these to be provided by private enterprise—when it is not public plunder. The public administration of the city is chaos gone mad. It is provided by a perplexing medley of different authorities, exercising diverse and ill-defined powers over different areas, elected on different dates, by different franchises, and with different qualifications for membership. The lack of public spirit in Bristol is due largely to the confusion public affairs present to the average or non-legal mind.

There is fortunately an element in the Town Council which makes for freedom—and improvement. It has disciples in the two political parties which in Bristol as elsewhere

divide the Council between them. I might have been able to chronicle a more brilliant record of reforms carried and reforms projected if this new spirit had been allowed freer and fairer play. The sixteen aldermen in the Council in no way represent the public or the public interest. They are absolutely independent of the public, electing themselves, and electing themselves often. By a strange accident they all belong to that political party which has never been popularly associated with popular measures and popular ideas. And these sixteen Bristol aldermen practically hold the government of the city in their own hands. By their votes they are invariably able to oppose—and oppose successfully—any of the measures the local progressives may introduce, even when the progressives—as has been the case frequently of late years—have formed a majority of the people's representatives. The one street improvement which has been most successfully carried



AN OLD BIT OF VICTORIA STREET.

out—that of wooden pavements—is consequent upon the unanimity with which the sixteen aldermen must have placed their heads together. Certain street improvements which would have been carried out years and years ago if Bristol had been Birmingham, are being slowly and silently mooted, discussed, and, here and there, acquiesced in. I can forgive Bristol much—for it is a city I have found, got to know, to understand, to like, and its people are possessed of loving and homely qualities—I can overlook all the local sins of commission and omission. But I cannot look over its aldermen. There is not one of these high and mighty gentlemen who would not faint at the possibility of my being able to do so, literally.

The alderman is a *fin de siècle* anomaly, even in Bristol, where everything unfortunately makes for privilege. Local government is a pure unadulterated farce, with the aldermen in the leading rôles. For if the voice of the people cannot be heard

against the loud cry of class privilege represented by these civic ghouls, what boots it that the ratepayers demonstrate their voting powers every November? In private life, the gentlemen who hold the aldermanic fortress in Bristol are doubtless amiable, interesting beings, who have done much good and accumulated much money. But in their public capacity as aldermen, they misuse their powers and discredit the very name of representative government. Aldermen may be as necessary to the cogitations of a Town Council as a seidlitz-powder to the recovery from a debauch, though this has yet to be proved. But however much the use of the *genus* may be satisfactorily demonstrated in other cities, the abuse has in Bristol reached extreme limits.

The meetings of the Town Council are frequent, and vary but little in their epoch-making procedure. There is a small band of extreme men, who form an edifying tail, but who nevertheless have been known to wag the body of the Council upon occasion. The Council Chamber is too frequently but the battle-ground of personal feuds, and the language at times is un-reportable. The Councillors are many of them men of peace, but it does not appear to me that they will ever obtain deliverance from their customary blood-thirsty discussions, until they have shed their Gore.

CHAPTER IV.

ON BOUNDARIES.

BY far the most important measure of reform proposed by the local authorities is the one associated with the extension of the city's boundaries. The unanimity with which this project is favourably viewed by those in authority, gave me cause to doubt its advantages. But after going as carefully as I could into the merits and demerits, the advantages and disadvantages, of this question, I can only add my hope to that of the advocates of the scheme, that success will attend their efforts. It is not only the greater enlargement of Bristol, but the consolidation of the present disorderly and disorganised system of parochial administration which is aimed at in this movement. It has two vigorous spokesmen in the Council, from both sides of the house politically, but at one in the advocacy of a new reforming policy. These gentlemen are Councillors Geo. Pearson and F. Gilmore Barnett.

The following account of municipal incongruities cannot be rendered amusing, but as detailing the whole of this Boundary question, in a more than figurative form, it may be considered interesting:—

The present Boundaries of the City of Bristol enclose 4,539 acres. The proposed additions will bring this up to 23,803 acres.

The population of Bristol within its present circumscribed area is—up to the time of going to press—221,700. This will be increased to 312,811 when the proposed incorporation is accomplished.

The present rateable value is £1,042,974; and will be increased to £1,336,097, when, &c. &c.

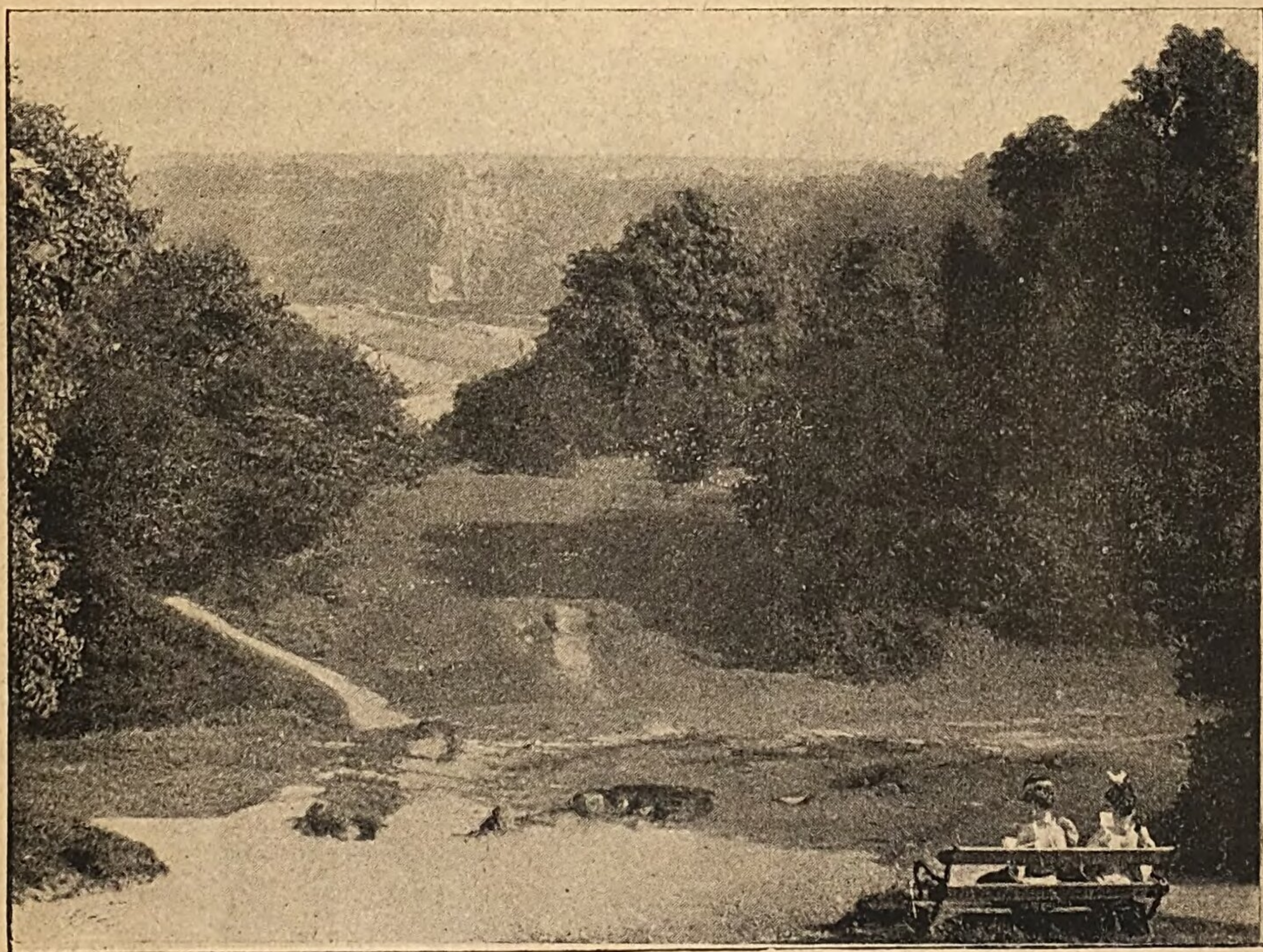
The parishes and parts of parishes proposed to be included in the Bristol municipal area are—Horfield, Stapleton, St. George, Mangotsfield, Kingswood, Brislington, Bedminster, Long Ashton, Shirehampton, Henbury, and Westbury.

These are really for all practical purposes parts of Bristol, representing the natural growth upon the outskirts of commercial cities. I shall endeavour to give the reasons and advantages of their inclusion within the municipal boundaries.

Bristol had been one of the first places in the kingdom to recognise the duty of the city *in common*, to bear the burden of the poor, by forming in 1696—The Bristol Incorporation of the Poor. The object of this was to raise one uniform rate throughout the entire city. There is no doubt that the words “raising” and “rates” were the baits

which hooked the local authorities of that period to the doing of anything so praiseworthy.

The duty of maintaining the poor was to be borne by the entire city regardless of the locality in which the poor happened to dwell. This was followed in 1834 by grouping all the parishes in the Country with groups called Unions for management, still keeping up the parochial chargeability and varying poor rates in the various parishes in the same union. This was amended about the year 1863 by the Union Chargeability Act, which made the total cost of the whole of the paupers in a Union a common charge on all the parishes in the Union, according to their rateable value, regardless of the number of the poor in the



ON CLIFTON DOWNS.

various parishes comprising the Union. When Bristol was extended in 1837 the Unions were left in the same position as before—with the result, that in the Municipal Borough of Bristol there is the Bristol Incorporation of the Poor, governing the old city, now referred to as the nineteen ancient parishes—presumably because there are only eighteen; the Bedminster Union—governing that part of Bristol adjoining the Somersetshire side; and the Barton Regis Union, governing that portion of the city of Bristol adjoining Gloucestershire. In each of these cases the portions of Bristol mentioned were joined to a large area of strictly rural country, in the one case extending on the Somersetshire side for ten miles in the county of Somerset, and in the other case extending for an equal distance into the County of Gloucester. The Guardians in each case, therefore,

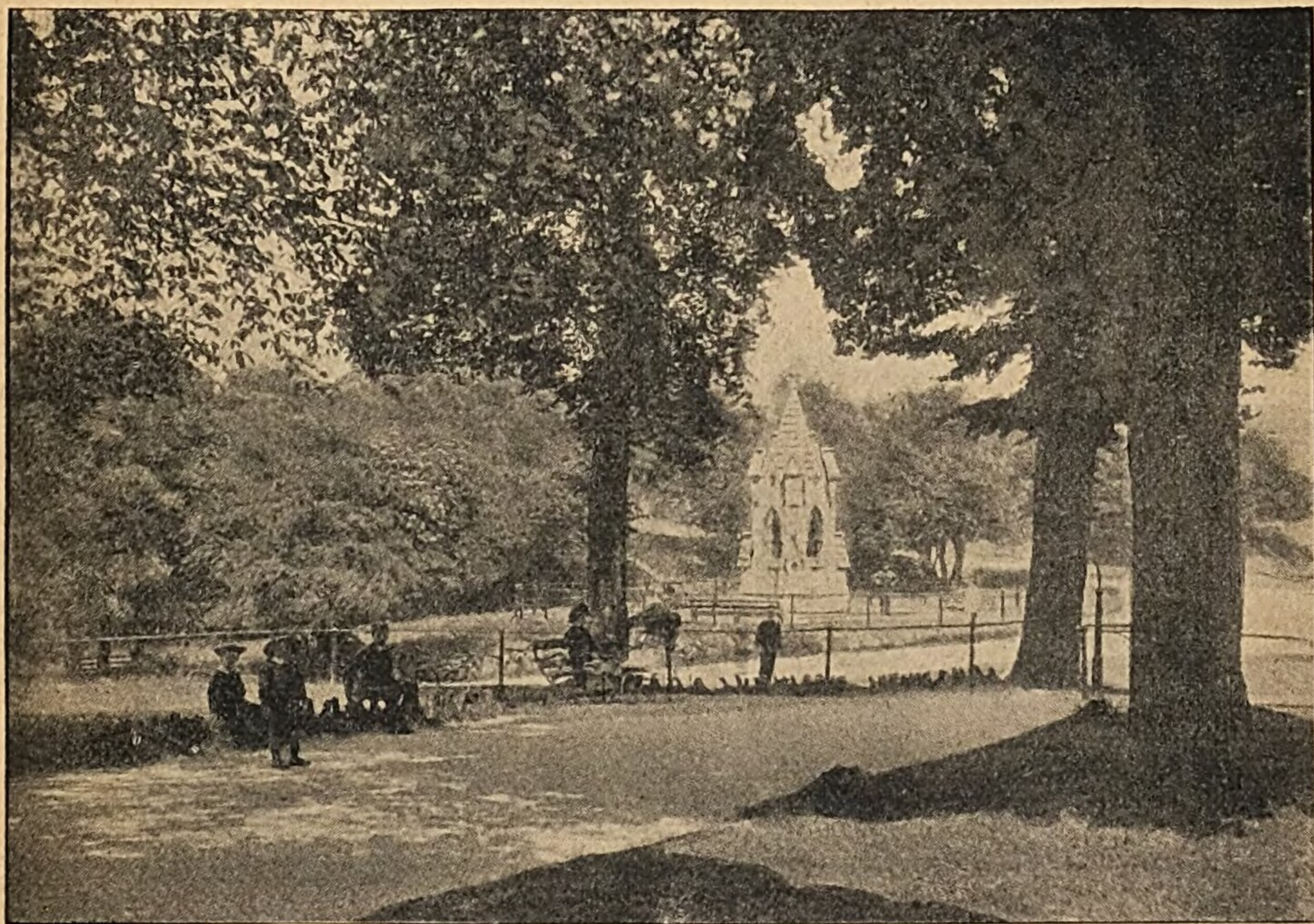
consisted of guardians partly rural and partly urban. The results were ; First—Different Poor rates in the same city (though with characteristic inconsistency Bristol had taught the whole country how to avoid this in 1696). Second—Different system of management of the poor—in the same city. Third—Disputes, involving considerable expense, as to the precise part of the city which ought to maintain a pauper. Fourth—Different qualifications for Guardians in different parts of the city. Women can sit on Bedminster and Barton Regis Boards, but not on Bristol. And it stands much in need of some sitting-on. Though I should not advocate women for the job. Hydraulic power is likely to exert the pressure necessary for this form of forcible argument. All these, with many other uncatalogued evils, must flow from a divided management of a common business.

When the Local Government Act of 1888 was passed, it found the two zealous gentlemen I have named in the Bristol Town Council. These revolutionaries saw their opportunity—and took it. They began to work to increase the area of the city, claiming the amalgamation of the Poor Law authorities within the city (as enlarged) as an incident in the enlargement. They supported their claims on the general grounds that the whole of a common population (they surely could not have intended to include the aldermen in this phrase!) enjoying common benefits should bear the common burden. They also objected to the anomalies presented by the existing conflict of Poor Law administration ; and further, maintained their position on the ground of health, considering it absurd that the Acts relating to the health of what is virtually one town should be differently administered by different governing bodies in the area of such town. The educational difficulties which arise from administering the Education Act differently in different parts of the city by different School Boards are things that could soon be mastered by the intelligent sixth-standarder, and require no analysis here. But the strongest plea for their work lay upon the basis of economical administration. The existence of each separate authority means the existence of a separate staff, with a separate set of establishment charges—and the number of these establishments is legion. In the area proposed for “Greater Bristol,” there are three Poor Law Unions, three School Boards, and two more in process of formation. The sanitary laws are administered by one Town Council, three Local Boards, and two Rural Sanitary Authorities—to say nothing of parish councils working within the areas of the Rural Sanitary Authorities. Highways are managed by one Town Council, three Highway Boards, and main roads are maintained by one Town Council and two County Councils. The benefits the present outside areas enjoy from being near Bristol are many. There is the natural and growing increase in the value of all property adjoining large centres, together with the benefit of passing their drainage for a small sum through the drains of Bristol, thus solving the question of sewage disposal. They enjoy the advantages of a good water supply obtained from Bristol, which they could not have provided for themselves ; and the same with the gas supply. They are now using the Bristol parks, free libraries, and the more courageous of them—the baths, and to a considerable extent share the advantages of the endowed schools. And then they are served by the tramways, on whose manifold charms and superabundant benefits I will take an opportunity of enlarging further on.

Then there is the saving in the collection of rates by doing away with a large number of the collectors. To show what can be done in this direction I append the following statement.

Bristol enjoys the following rates:—Poor Rate. Borough Rate. Borough Dock Rate. Harbour Rate. General District (known as Sanitary) Rate. And in certain parts, an intercepting Sewer Rate.

The practice of collecting the Poor Rate is through the Board of Guardians by means of the overseers of the various parishes, except in the case of the 18 nineteen ancient ones. The Borough Rate, Borough Dock Rate, and Harbour Rate are also collected by the overseers with the Poor Rate, on precepts issued by the Town Council and the



PROMENADE AND DRINKING FOUNTAIN, CLIFTON.

various Boards of Guardians, affording an instance of the precept being better than the practice. This is done by overseers or assistant overseers, and involves the whole district being covered by one set of collectors. But when the Town Council wish to raise money by a General District Rate, they do not add the amount they require to the precept to the overseers, as in the cases of the other rates, but go to the Poor Law Authorities and obtain a copy of the Poor Rate. Having got this, they then proceed to assess a General District Rate over precisely the same area, and on precisely the same lucky individuals, though not on precisely the same amounts. Having done this, they proceed to send a second set of collectors over the same ground and to the same men as the Poor Rate collectors last came to for the Poor Rate, to collect the General District Rate. The wicked

waste of time and money involved in this must be obvious to all. But not content with this, they have to raise an Intercepting Sewer Rate. This is a rate made over a small area within the borough, and included in the Poor Rate and General District Rate area of assessment. But they do not add this rate to any of the others to collect. There is too much obvious common-sense about such a proceeding. No. They set to work and make a third copy of the Poor Rate for the small Intercepting Sewer Rate, and having done this they appoint a third set of collectors to collect this small rate (about threepence in the pound), and the sum collected in each case is so small that they are obliged to pay a much larger sum in the pound collected to collectors of this rate than to any others, to make it worth their while to collect it at all.

By this magnificent multiplication of unnecessary collectors, the ratepayers manage to



THE MOUTH OF THE AVON.

pay in the shape of collectors' poundage—for collecting £250,000, £6,000 or thereabouts. These figures convey more of their interesting absurdity when they are compared with others. Bradford—a town without a history, but in many respects fitted for the purpose of affording comparison with Bristol, as it is about the same size, has the same initial letter, and yet has in addition to collect its own water and gas accounts, as a result of owning the supplies of these commodities—Bradford has a Central Rate office and collects—

Rates	...	...	...	...	...	...	£131,888
Water Rates	...	...	...	...	...	...	119,268
Gas Rates	...	...	...	...	...	...	198,346

a total of £449,502. The total expenses of the collectors' department are £1,855. Ahem!

There is little doubt that by means of the proposed Extension Act, the consolidation of the local rates could be arranged, and the collecting done through a central office. Between £3,000 and £4,000 per annum could be saved the ratepayers upon the item of rate collection alone.

And then, to give just one more instance in favour of this "Greater Bristol" question, from another standpoint. Bristol, I have found, is some six or seven miles from the mouth of the Avon, which owing to the zigzag nature of this stream—which throughout the course of its liquid career traces curves of which no mathematician could find the equation—is unsuited for the harbourage and safe transit of modern mammoth ships. Consequently, large docks have been provided on both sides of the entrance to the Avon, and are now the property of the Bristol Corporation. There are those who like myself see in the not distant future an enormous extension of this dock accommodation—but that is another subject, and can wait its turn. The point is, that at Avonmouth, a new Bristol is growing, sufficiently far away to play the very deuce with the shipping and trade of Bristol should it ever be allowed to remain aloof, and yet sufficiently near Bristol to be part and parcel of the parent city. The greatest objection made in the past to the extension of dock accommodation at the mouth of the Avon, lay in the fact that Bristolians feared they were making for the greater glory of an alien community not at the alien's expense. In the proposed extension of the Bristol boundaries, Avonmouth (which is in the parish of Shirehampton) is included. And as the sea manifests an unreasonable but immovable objection to being taken to Bristol, Bristol had better take a leaf out of Mahomet's book—and go to the sea. Without rivalries and petty jealousies, the great district watered by the first ten miles of the Avon would utilise for the common good the superb natural advantages the mouth of that river presents for raising Bristol once more into the maritime position it ought never to have lost.

"Greater Bristol" is, it appears to me, a struggle for Bristol's existence,—a preventive against its ever falling again into the abyss of lost cities—with pasts.

CHAPTER V.

ON MAGISTRATES.

THE task of preserving the peace in Bristol is imposed upon some half hundred magistrates, and the Watch Committee. The composition of the former or non-representative body affords some striking—or, as that is not a sufficiently peaceful term—some interesting particulars, not to say food for reflection. These gentlemen, if compared with a similar number in any city in England, would, upon the score of ultra-respectability and extreme wealth, show up most favourably the worldly state of the western city's representatives. A huge proportion of these Justices of the Peace are heads of Bristol's great business houses. There is not a single representative of labour in their number. Now as a great part of a magistrate's duties nowadays is to decide upon points affecting the conditions of capital and labour, the impartiality of the Bristol magistrates must have plenty of opportunities for displaying itself. I hope the results are satisfactory to the opponents—or rather, the occasional victims, of capital.

To me, it appears to be a strangely scandalous state of things, that only one side of local life—and it, the one most able to take care of itself—should have not only all the leisure, but the power of giving the other side time. Here in this extraordinary want of class justice, is the Lord Chancellor's opportunity, and a good score of working-men magistrates should be at once provided for Bristol. Apart from the ostensible fairness of such a course, the new blood might infuse just that proper amount of grit, which the most recent public action on the part of the Bristol magistrates—which I was privileged to witness—showed them to be so deficient in.

Bristol has an unenviable notoriety in the persistency of its labour grievances. The composition of its bench of magistrates may be in part the natural cause of this, but only in part. The end of last year found several bodies of labouring men and women out "on strike." Into the rights and wrongs of this question I am not going to dive. It is my object here to give an account of an extraordinary piece of Cæsarism which the local magistracy displayed on the eve of my departure from their city. On the evening of the 23rd December, 1892, a labour demonstration was held in the city, assisted by the usual bands, banners, and banter, inseparable from these harmless, and frequently useful gatherings. A notice was served to the leaders of the demonstration arbitrarily prohibiting the use of toy lanterns and certain streets. The toy lanterns were accordingly dispensed with. For the purpose of insuring that the demonstrators should not use the

prescribed streets, the handful of police, who would usually have arranged this, were not deemed sufficient. Not only was the greater portion of the Bristol Constabulary massed along the never-for-a-moment-in danger route, but *posses* of police from the adjoining districts were drafted into the city, and, to crown all, this most punctilious, clear-headed, and calmly judicial body of magistrates let loose some hundreds of mounted soldiery, whom they had imported from Aldershot the night before.

In spite of these exasperating influences things went off quietly enough. And here was the magistrates' dilemma. Having got their soldiers, they did not feel inclined to copy the tactics of a celebrated Roman general, and march them up the hills of Bristol for the purpose of marching them down again. A use had to be found them. for Their existence in Bristol had to be justified at the butt end of their lances, if need be. And—kept

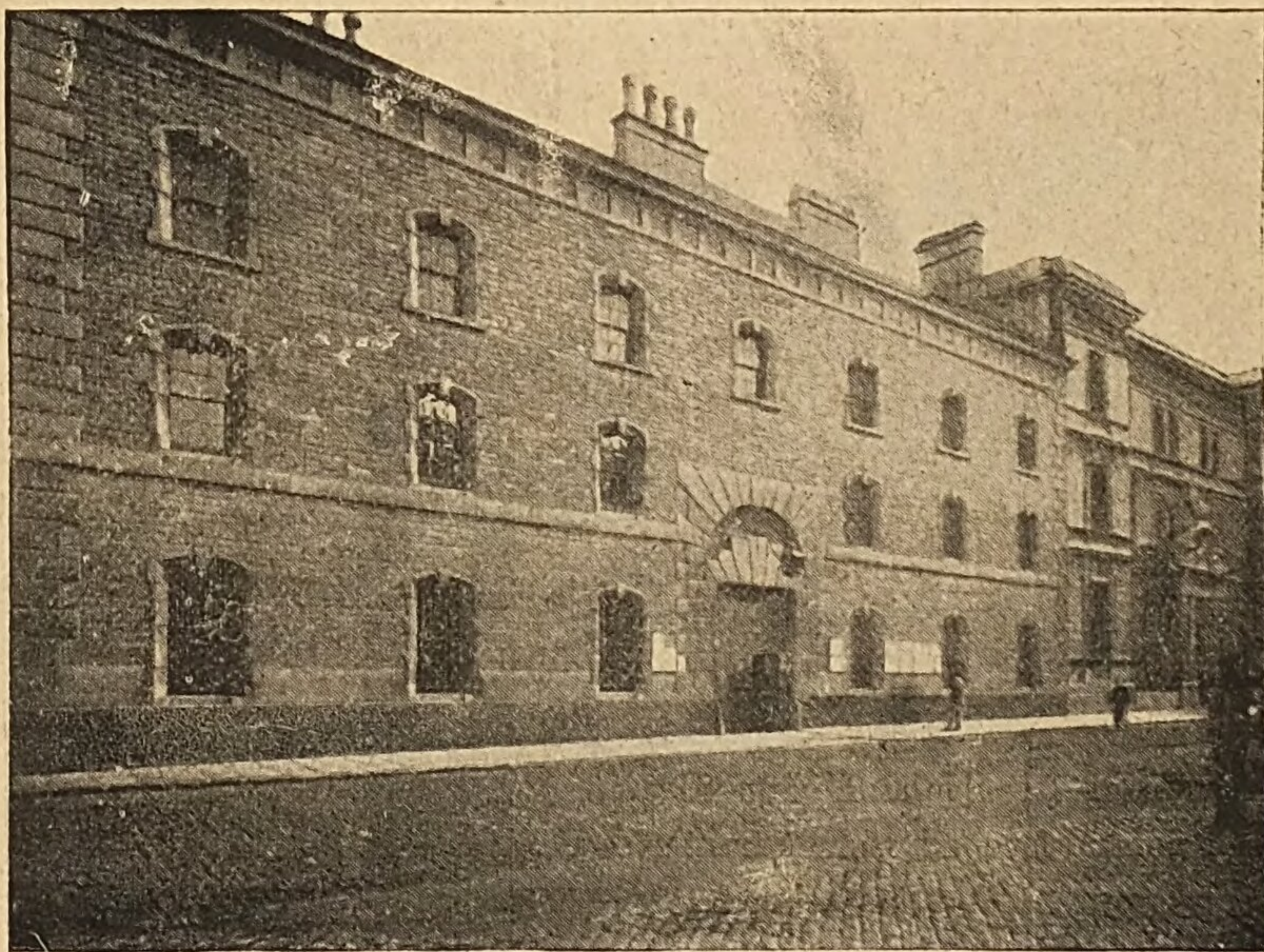


VICTORIA STREET AND NEPTUNE'S STATUE.

in countenance by the presence of a real live Bristol magistrate chosen presumably for his proficiency in horsemanship, who, spite of the charger upon which he was mounted, insisted upon riding in the van—the cavalry were instructed to clear the streets of the good-humoured throngs. There were the usual regulatorary spasmodic movements of mounted soldiers, who wheeled right and left, right and left; the usual stampede of terrified folk who nearly knocked over the stationary policemen in their fright, who, in turn, knocked over the flying frightened—veritable bolts from the blue—and thus supplied with their staves the usual half-dozen broken heads for the infirmiry staff's benefit; the usual magisterial proceedings with the amusing placing of sundry persons in the dock before some of those responsible for the whole pother; the usual sentences—scapegoats were wanted—and the unusual row

in the Council set up by those members of it who were not employers of labour. The impolicy of the magistracy in invoking military aid without the least necessity, for the purpose of repressing a legitimate public demonstration of the "magistrated"—was—well—not done in the name of common-sense, but law. And the two things have nothing in common.

Bristol has no stipendiary magistrate. It is the only large city in the kingdom that has not. There is a certain amount of distinction connected with being the exception. So this explains what might otherwise be inexplicable. But the non-existence of that useful gentleman is the cause of much confusion and more bad justice. Such events as an appeal from a resuscitated "drunk" to his friends on the bench—with effect—has happened in the Bristol courts. Then again, take the case of those magistrates who are



POLICE STATION AND POLICE COURT.

connected with grocery. How zealously must these gentlemen assist the police to carry out the administration of the Food and Drugs Act? The fact that this is one of the things that in a better regulated community would be left to the Medical Officer of Health, does not help us to answer the query satisfactorily. But I have said sufficient to demonstrate for my purpose in what way Bristol is magistrated, and I will dismiss the case.

To the Watch Committee is relegated the management of the police. Its existence dates from 1836. It is a slow organisation, though when wound up, the Bristol Watch Committee has gone well. The Chief Constable is Mr. E. W. Coathupe, of whom I intend to say more—further on. He has under his command four superintendents, sixteen inspectors, one inspector of public carriages, one detective inspector, twenty-five sergeants,

303 constables, seven detectives, and one chief clerk. Then there is the river police—which brings up the not too grand total of the force to 393.

There are several police stations. I only visited one during my stay. Which may be counted to me for righteousness. This was the central office, in Bridewell Street, which adjoins the Police Court Buildings. There is a brass band attached to the force. And considerable assurance.

The police in Bristol are not only too few, but would have too much to do if they were more. They are as a body, young men from the country, but know the time of day fairly well: which is all that some people expect from a policeman. They furnish the local fire brigade from their ranks. Originally, the fire brigades of the city were maintained by the Insurance Companies. In 1876, the Watch Committee directed their attention to the subject, and established the present Municipal Fire Brigade. This is a fairly efficient body, but is unable to cope with more than one decently big fire at a time. Should a second fire be inconsiderate enough to claim attention the while the brigade was engaged in cooling the ardour of a first, there would be nothing for it but to leave the ill-mannered late-comer to its fate. But Bristol is so well governed, that the danger of such a contingency is too remote to allow of anyone—like the fire—being very much put out over it.

The condition of the city, from the police point of view, is eminently satisfactory. Crime is good, but drunkenness could be better. The streets are well kept—also from a police point of view. Bristol is the most outwardly orderly large city in the kingdom—perhaps in the world.

CHAPTER VI.

ON INK-SPILLING.

BRISTOL has a reputation for looseness which is not deserved. On the contrary, it is singularly well "pressed." Prior to the year 1695 there was not a single newspaper printed in the West of England. This, I may parenthetically mention, was the period euphemistically classified as "the good old times." The whole tenor of Bristol's social life and feeling is accurately reflected in its daily press of to-day. The ultra-pomposity of its great upper, and greater middle classes, upon whose shop and shirt fronts the word "respectability" is equally marked, is shadowed forth in the conducting and the contents of two of the three morning papers. The third faithfully represents whatever there is of Radical grumblings in this city of innate Conservatism. Bristol does not consider itself Liberal less, because in everything it conserves more.

The unaccustomed quantity of respectability which is associated with the dominant Liberalism of the city is greatly due to the intelligent manner in which its tenets are upheld in the leading local newspaper. There is nothing extreme about the *Western Daily Press*, unless it be its completeness of accoutrement. It possesses just the taint of the new journalism in its columns—minus the screeching. It was an imported production, due entirely to the enterprise of two northern gentlemen, who came to Bristol because it had no penny morning paper. Even at that time—1858—life without a daily record of passing events was not worth its penny paper-money purchase. The *Western Daily Press* was first issued at No. 1, Broad Street, by the late Mr. P. S. MacIver, who was assisted by its present proprietor and editor, Mr. Walter Reid. It led the way; the others—for Bristol had then weekly newspapers of an excellent sort—followed. In 1859, the *Bristol Observer*, a healthy weekly paper—price one penny—was issued from the *Daily Press* offices; and in 1877, the first and only *Evening Newspaper* the city has ever permitted to thrive and flourish, was born in the same place and of the same fostering parentage. These three journals together form what is one of the most remarkable newspaper properties in the three kingdoms. The *Press* is absolutely independent, using the term in its most honourable sense. It has advocated local reforms with a persistency that elsewhere would long since have reaped a substantial harvest of town improvements. Its opinions carry almost undue weight with its audience, for they understand from what a high level of interest for the general weal its pronouncements upon any public question are formed. Scarcely a paper in England that is so respected by friend or opponent, or read so equally by both.

city. Internally, they are splendidly appointed, and could well serve as a model to newspaper offices generally. The huge ground floor is devoted to the handsome publishing offices, the palatial paper store, and the machine room. The latter contains three "Victory" machines—one for each of Mr. Reid's papers. The offices upstairs for the editorial and reporting staff are calculated to make the mouth of the average Fleet Street journalist water. And the average Fleet Street journalist's mouth does not assimilate water except under cases of extreme pressure—hydraulics literally. Mr. Walter Reid is, as I have said, the editor of the big morning daily, and is assisted by his son, Mr. William Nichol Reid.



"WESTERN DAILY PRESS" OFFICES.

But Mr. Reid's oldest and most respected of coadjutors is supplied by the modest personality of Mr. W. E. Hicks, his veritable *fidus Achates*. According to his own account, Mr. Hicks is a journalist happy in having no history. He was born in Bristol, and has been associated with journalism—i.e., *The Western Daily Press*—for twenty years. He had charge of the evening paper until 1883, but has since been completely associated—not to say assimilated—with the daily organ. He is a member of the Council of the Institute of Journalists, and his pet subjects are Imperial Finance and

Political Economy—tempered by cricket. Even the literary *Press* has a commercial side, looked after by Mr. Charles A. Tovey—a gentleman who looks before, as well as after.

The stern and unbending Tories have their spokesmen in the press, and it is called *The Bristol Times and Mirror*, with a small sub-title thrown in:—“*Felix Farley’s Journal* (established 1714) was incorporated with the *Bristol Times* in April, 1853; and the *Bristol Times and Journal* with the *Bristol Mirror* in January, 1865.”

There is the conservatism of age—past and present—in the broadsides of this old Tory organ. It is well printed, and well written, but has not the broadness of view—or sheet—of the *Daily Press*. It is an excellent penny paper five days of the week, but is twopence and twice its normal size on Saturday. There is an unpleasant incongruity about this rise in price which has nothing to recommend it but an aversion from changing a state of things which has existed for so many years. But there are people in Bristol—holding orthodox conservative views—who object to paying twopence at any time for their daily paper. And these people buy the *Press*.

The *Times and Mirror* is a fine business property, and is run on the most approved commercial principles. It has neither the circulation nor the position of its great Liberal rival, but it well knows the uses of advertisement, and profits accordingly.

Speaking generally, west-country people are not ardent advertisers. It is one of those comparatively new-fashioned methods of money-making, which, to the average well-to-do Bristolian, savour of the Devil and all his ways. So there is less public and prepaid announcement of the Bristolian’s wares and whereabouts than one would expect from such a throbbing trading centre. But of what there is going, the *Times and Mirror* gets its share, or the firm of T. D. Taylor, Sons, & Hawkins know the reason why. The paper claims to be Progressive—which is scarcely consistent with the belief it professes in the selfishness of all opposition to the existing order of things. It has never been guilty of a Liberal sentiment in the whole course of its successful career. So inconsistency is not one of its faults. It is the sheet-anchor of the landlord-cum-Church party, and though frequently weighed in the balance, has never been found wanting. The Conservatism it preaches is of a vigorous character, and of the good old fighting school. It is neither meek, mild, nor unmaledictory. It hits hard, and is not the less useful to its party because it is somewhat truculent in its methods. And in the readableness of its leaderettes, it establishes a real claim upon the attention of those who require to be amused with their news. The offices of the *Times and Mirror* are hidden away in the rear of the General Post Office, and are not what the proprietors would like them to be, or what I consider worthy of them.

The third of the Bristol morning papers is the *Daily Mercury*. It is the organ of Bristol Radicalism, and is deliciously frank and independent. It had a beginning about the year 1790, and has no end of history. Its age cannot wither, nor can the withdrawal of Tory custom stale, the infinite variety of its Topical Notes. It is perhaps the most local of the three daily papers, affording much time, patience, and space to the compilation of local reports. Some of the most distinguished men of letters in England have had an association with the *Mercury*. Its offices are in Broad Street, and it has for its motto:—“*The liberty of the press is the palladium of all the civil, political, and religious rights of*

Another device, probably the figure of Mercury, is supposed to have been here, but is defaced in Original

The BRISTOL
Weekly Mercury
 FROM
Holland, France, Spain, &c.



WITH

Fresh Advices, Foreign and Domestick :

F A R

Exceeding all other News Papers.

Saturday, DECEMBER the 1st, 1716.

[No. 61]

By Saturday's and Monday's Post, we have the Mail from France, with these following Advices.

Paris, November 28.



IS advis'd from Cadiz, that the Rovers of Sallee, who of late infested that Coast with a Desinn upon the Brazil-Fleet, are all return'd now to Sallee to re-victual. The French Ships lately return'd home from the South Sea, have on Board Merchandizes to the Value of 3 Millions: They left behind in

those Seas abundance of our Merchant Ships the Men whereof do not go ashore, but the Goods are brought to them, for which they pay ready Money.

We hear from Gibraltar, that the Garrison there have receiv'd a Reinforcement of 600 Men, and a considerable Quantity of Ammunition and Provisions. 'Tis said the Great Dutchess of Tuscany is very ill. The Price of Sugar at Lisbon is fallen considerably since the Arrival of the Brazil Fleet; so they design to import Part of it to the Harbours of France. A Fleet of English and Dutch Merchant Ships bound Home from the Mediterranean, and assembled at Cenoa,

[Price Three Half-Pence, or Eighteen Pence per Quarter in Town.]

Any Person may have this Paper, every Monday Morning, at Mr. JOHN PALMER'S Book-feller in Gloucester.

Bristol: Printed by
Henry Sleep

an Englishman." In spite of this, it is Gladstonian in politics, and is not quite so well printed as it deserves to be. For it is cleverly edited and smartly written, and Bristol without its *Mercury* would not be a place worthy of discovery. And in its way, it is an anomaly. For it approaches things from so comparatively advanced a platform, as to render its publication in this steady-going not-wanting-to-be-hurried city, a thing of wonder and sardonic joy. It is most unpopular with the readers of the *Times and Mirror*, and I have said much in saying so little. It is felt to be in the way, and to be preaching a general upsetting of pomp and privilege. And that Bristol should countenance Radicalism would be in distinct defiance of the laws relating to cause and effect. It is to be purchased for one penny every week-day: but it issues a supplement on Saturday, composed of news plus that new journalistic nuisance—fiction that is not pure journalism—and this can be obtained for the expenditure of an additional penny. Here, at all events, you may not only pay your money, but take your choice.

Clifton has its *Chronicle*, published on Wednesdays, and Bristol its comic paper. The humour of the *Magpie* is not quite so respectable as its associations would lead one to expect. But it is of a nature that does not bid for hilarity, or any un-decorous conduct unbefitting the Bristolian. Its jokes are as stale and as familiar in our mouths as household bread. It appears to have a vigorous existence, and has many strong-lunged advocates in Bristol streets.

I have written sufficient to show how varied is the ink-spilling in Bristol—sufficient to make one despair of the time when peace shall reign on earth, and goodwill take the place of every man's morning paper.

CHAPTER VII.

ON GAS.

BRISTOL is lighted (*sic*) by gas. The first attempt to make darkness visible in Bristol by its means took place in 1811, when a pertinacious dyer—by name, John Briellat, who indefatigably experimented with the new illuminant—by example and by lecture—was the cause of giving Bristol precedence over London in the use of gas in thoroughfares. Mr. Briellat's motto must have been, "*Never say die.*" It is not so strange as it reads to find that Bristolians were loth to abandon their flickering and unpleasant-smelling tallow candles in favour of this new invention of the Devil. There was a prophetic reluctance to part with the old evil before taking on with the new about this, worthy of attention in these materialistic days.

In 1816 the Bristol Gas Company was formed, with Mr. Briellat as manager. Lewin's Mead Chapel was the first public building in Bristol to be lighted with gas. Its cost was at the rate of fifteen shillings per thousand feet, but it nevertheless made great headway against the prejudices opposed to its use. In 1822 a rival gas company was formed, and a burning competition took place between the two opposition concerns. They amalgamated in 1853. The gas supply of Bristol has ever since been a virtual monopoly, and is known under the style and title of the Bristol United Gas Light Company. It makes a profit of nearly £35,000 per annum, and is responsible for the greater portion of the Bristol labours of the Recording Angel. It is, I fear, something approaching the sacrilegious to remark, that if the supply of gas in Bristol were "municipalised," it might make a difference to the rates. But that is quite by the way. And, as might be expected in a district supplied with this particular company's production, Bristolians cannot possibly see their way to doing this. So they permit a great dividend manufacturing company to meter it out to those who cannot see their way out of using it. It would be much better were this company-supplied gas no longer permitted to cast its shadow over the municipality's pavements.

The gas question in Bristol is a no light grievance—literally. The opinion I had formed to the effect that the Bristolian is somewhat sleepy, is, I have discovered, directly traceable to the somnolent influence of the local gas supply upon his too susceptible nature. There is nothing of the light and leading quality about the Bristol Gas Company. It approximates more to the dark and misleading order of things: and I should dearly like to let a little daylight through the existing, though much grumbled at, condition of affairs.

That the "gassy" powers of Bristol are in league with the local opticians, no one who like myself has endeavoured to spend his nights awake while located in that in-many-things-to-be-commended city, can have the least possible shadow of a doubt. And even that shadow is due to the subject's association with the Bristol gas. I have heard of "blinding rays," but I have seen what it is to feel the darkness of a Bristol lighted thoroughfare. Nothing could compensate the sufferer who pays gas bills in Bristol. This may account for the law of compensations not working in this particular instance. For it is not both cheap and nasty. It is only one of these. And yet it is neither one thing nor the other. It is an almost indefinable product, this Bristol gas: it is so strangely out of place and in discordance with the times it is being made and sworn at in. And the great and capital city of the West must keep dark under the stigma of being the worst lighted city in the three kingdoms.

But it—the Gas Company—is nothing if not humorous—so I expect it is nothing, for the endeavour to be funny is purely at the expense of the consumer: and though the method has a meter, it possesses neither rhyme nor reason. Not only is the Bristolian led like a sheep in this matter, but he is fleeced into the bargain. In one of the local newspapers of the period, the present historian reads with much interest that a small shop-keeper has written to say, that during a certain period of the year anterior to the time of his complaint, he was charged for 56,400 feet of gas; that in the corresponding period of the following year, the official statement showed an increase of 8,600 feet, although the conditions under which the gas was consumed were precisely similar. He went on to assert that if there was any difference at all, it was in the direction of striving for economy—which I can readily believe. So this cubic-centipedal feat upon the part of the Gas Company's automatic accomplice goes either to prove that the age of miracles is still ours, or that many capable journalists are lost to the world through the gas-meter's misplaced energies in the prosaic paths of registration.

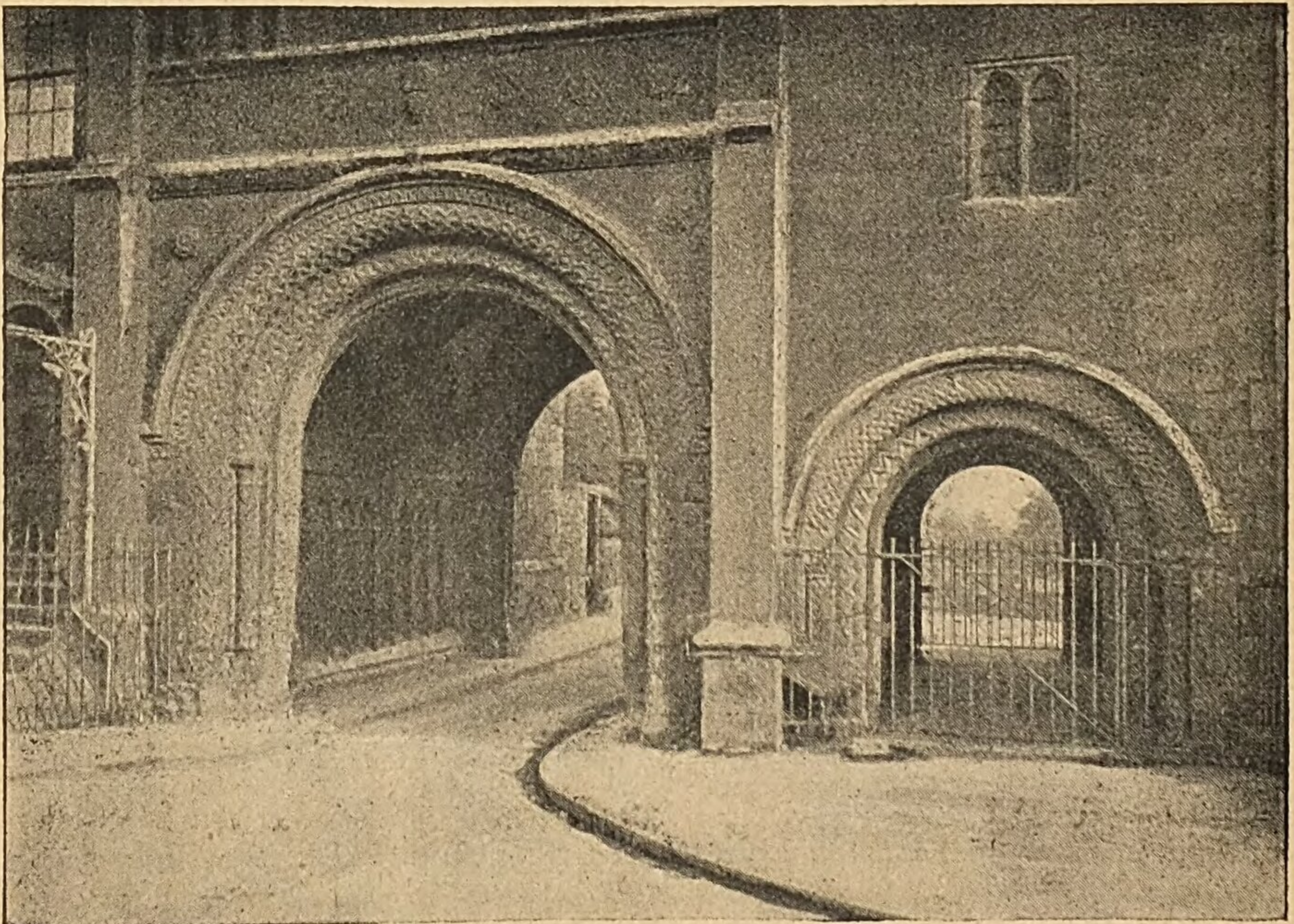
Now there is nothing so mysterious as the inner workings of the gas-meter. Generation after generation has come and gone, all equally ignorant of the methods by which the strangely gymnastic procedure of gas-measurement is accomplished. Here is scope for a Royal Commission, and I should recommend Bristol as its place of sitting. No man is a prophet in his own country, and, unless he be a gas-consumer, seldom even a source of profit. But I feel convinced that the result of the deliberations of such a committee would incarcerate every gas-meter in Her Majesty's prisons, as an uncommonly common sort of thief.

It might interest Bristolians to learn that an illuminant which is neither oil nor gas has been discovered, and, so prone are some communities to change, is actually in use in certain adventurous cities. It is called the Electric Light. I impart this original information in a feeling of the purest kindness, and in sympathy with the burners of the Bristol Gas Company's consuming fabrication.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON TRAMWAYS.

PEDESTRIANS in Bristol streets are seldom in a hurry. There is an entire absence of that oblivion to all things but the necessity of beating some imaginary pedestrian record, which distinguishes the business-pursuing people in the thoroughfares of other big cities. The fact is also demonstrated by the frequency with which the Bristolian avails

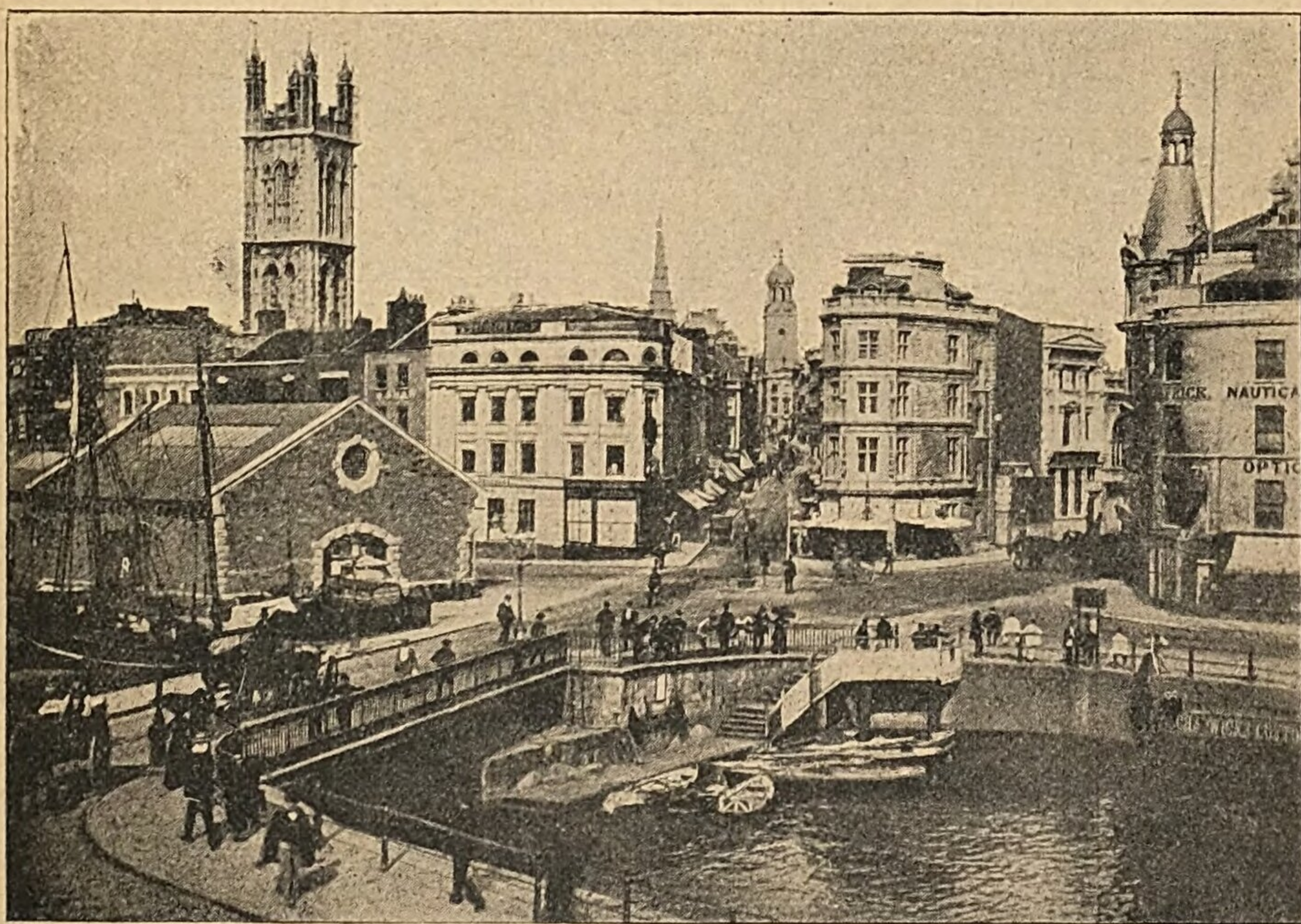


OLD NORMAN GATEWAY, COLLEGE GREEN.

himself of the vehicular locomotion in his streets. It were quicker to walk—even slowly. Bristol possesses cabs, both of the hansom and common order of “growler,” and has a system of tramcars and omnibuses. The two latter and many of the former own one sway. And there’s the rub. A little competition might hurry things a bit. But to proceed—if only to put these vehicles out of countenance.

I will do my level best to show that Bristol, as a city, is a most uneven sort of place. Every now and then its streets move heavenwards with a suddenness almost appalling. It is not only the good streets that distinguish themselves in this way: the most disreputable of Bristol's thoroughfares share in this lofty leaning. Jerusalem's reputation for hills is at the most a valley-ant bid for equality with Bristol. By far the quickest way of getting from some parts of Bristol to others, is to fall down there. The descent may be a long one, but it is certain. So to cope with these natural difficulties which beset the anything but straight path of the local traveller, the city possesses about the most inadequate system of 'buses and tramcars in this much road-cut-up land of ours.

It is a grave error to rush through life, I think: and so evidently does the Bristol



THE DRAWBRIDGE—AS IT WAS.

Tramways Company. I have heard the genial Bristolian admit with a kind of appreciatory deprecation, being "a bit slow;" but in nothing does his candour receive more convincing testimony than in his street-car system—or I should say, want of it. It is a comparatively easy thing to enter a Bristol tramcar, even if the enterer be infirm, and the car pursuing its maddest career. But the leaving of it, except in disgust and with the expenditure of one's whole stock of patience, is a much delayed operation.

To commence with, it is not as easy to catch a tramcar in Bristol, as a cold. You may have to wait a quarter of an hour at any particular terminus of this not too particular tramway system. Now I am safe in asserting that no other business community in the kingdom would be satisfied with such an audaciously infrequent serve-out-ice as this. The

cars, it is necessary to mention, are run by horses, and a board of directors, who—well, are not horses. Now having caught your car, you await results. Some people wait longer than others. So much depends upon the place the passenger is hopeful of arriving at. In most towns when in doubt, you ask—a tram-conductor. But this course will not serve in Bristol. Each car carries, in addition to the driver and the unfortunate passengers, a small boy; not the nice small boy of the nursery story-books, oh dear no! This boy—for though there are many there is but one type—is the production of the Bristol Tramways Company. They have evolved him out of all the unsatisfactory elements of west-country *gamin*-dom: and the real thing, the finished but unpolished article, is the compound I am endeavouring to give a small pen-and-ink sketch of.

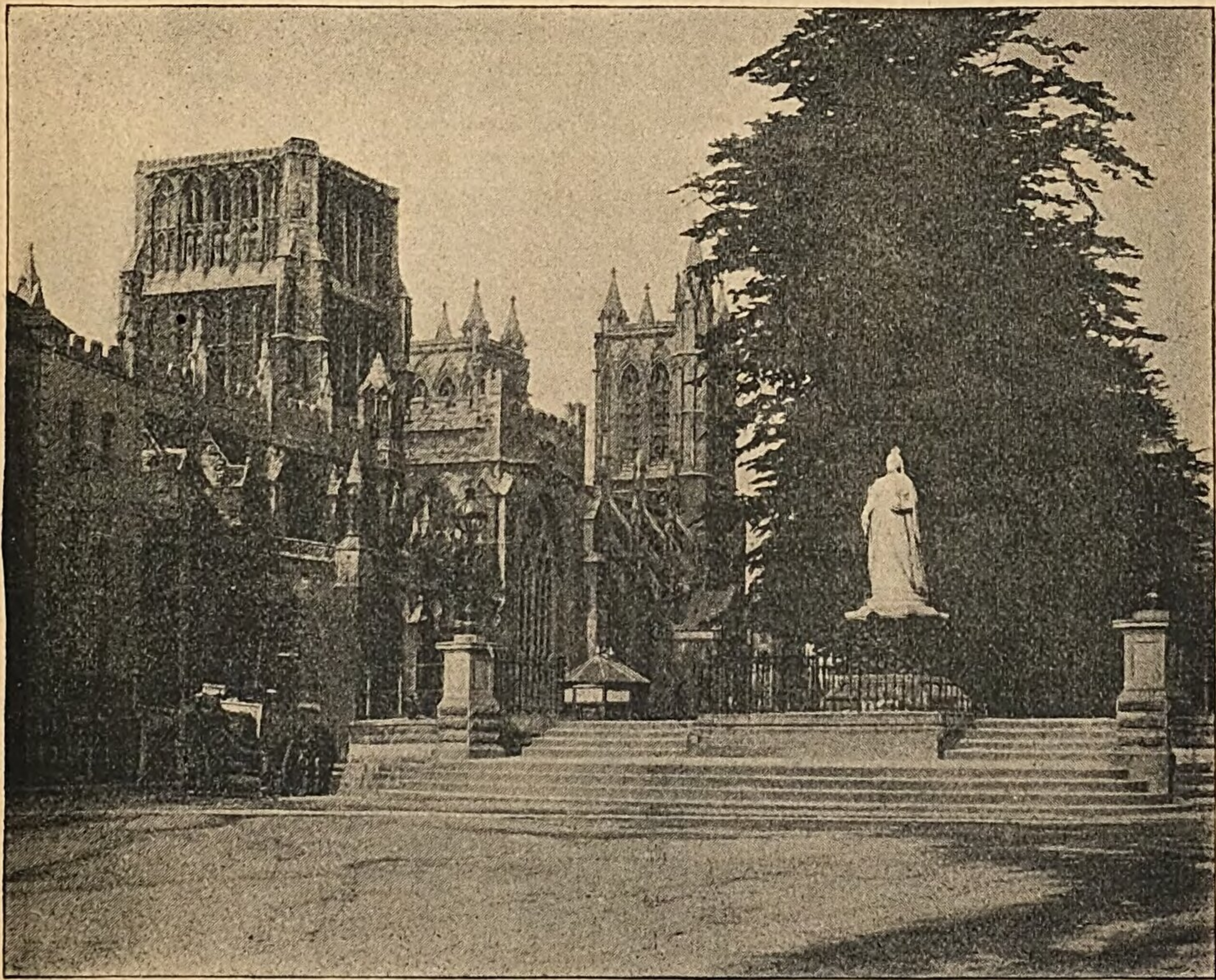
When once this boy has been created a tram-conductor, a strange thing happens. He is no longer a boy: he is a tram-conductor. Not the ordinary, hard-worked, under-paid, civil, and obliging tram-conductor of our general ken! He becomes a Bristol tram-conductor—which is short for autocrat of all he surveys and collects fares from. He is dirty, rude, disobliging, and objectionable. He has never been known to disqualify himself for the position he holds by saying “Thank you,” or by answering a tremblingly uttered request for information civilly. Taking him all in all he is an extraordinary personage, the product of his city and age. His age, in fact, is the only thing in his favour. He is too young to notice seriously, but young enough to save our economical tramway company a considerable amount of the wages that would have to be paid to grown-up men. When I have a decade or two to spare for the purpose, I will write a treatise upon this decayed west-country production. He has his good points, taking him all round, no doubt. He must be brave, at all events. For only they deserve the fare.

There is a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals in Bristol. The members must be shareholders in this tramway company. Upon no other hypothesis can I explain the scandalous manner in which the unfortunate *quadrupedal* beasts in the service of the company are worked without interference. Such hills as Bristol is heir to require other than flesh and blood efforts for their scaling. Here is the happy hunting ground for steam, or cable, or electric power, if ever there was one. Not only must a traveller on the Bristol tramways be a person of great endurance and patience, but heartless also. For it is the very refinement of cruelty to add even one ounce to the load these poor straining brutes have daily to haul up the declivities of Bristol city.

The first line of tramways was opened in Bristol in 1875. Amusingly enough, this was laid down by the Corporation. It was taken over and worked by the Bristol Tramways Company, Limited, in conjunction with several others they provided the city with. The system itself is far-reaching in character, and enterprise has been shown in the construction of new routes. It is the means employed in working them that are so much at fault. The company make a splendid profit out of the gratuitous mis-use of Bristol streets, and declare excellent annual dividends. They carry between five and six million passengers every year, and a substantial sum to the reserve account. The fares are collected at penny stages, and it is only fair to admit are drawn up upon commendably generous lines.

The Bristol omnibus is an interesting study. It is constructed to carry a limited number of passengers, and the small-boy conductor. The procedure of these vehicles is quite out of the ordinary run. It is made up of a series of spasmodic spurts, with a goal in view, and some hills to get over. Of all the routes wheeled by these, well—not literally one-horse affairs, that to Clifton is the most useful.

The service consists of four 'buses an hour during the most respectable parts of the day. They start from the city side of the drawbridge, attached to two generally venerable horses, whose gravity is in fitting accord with their task. They start at a leisurely trot

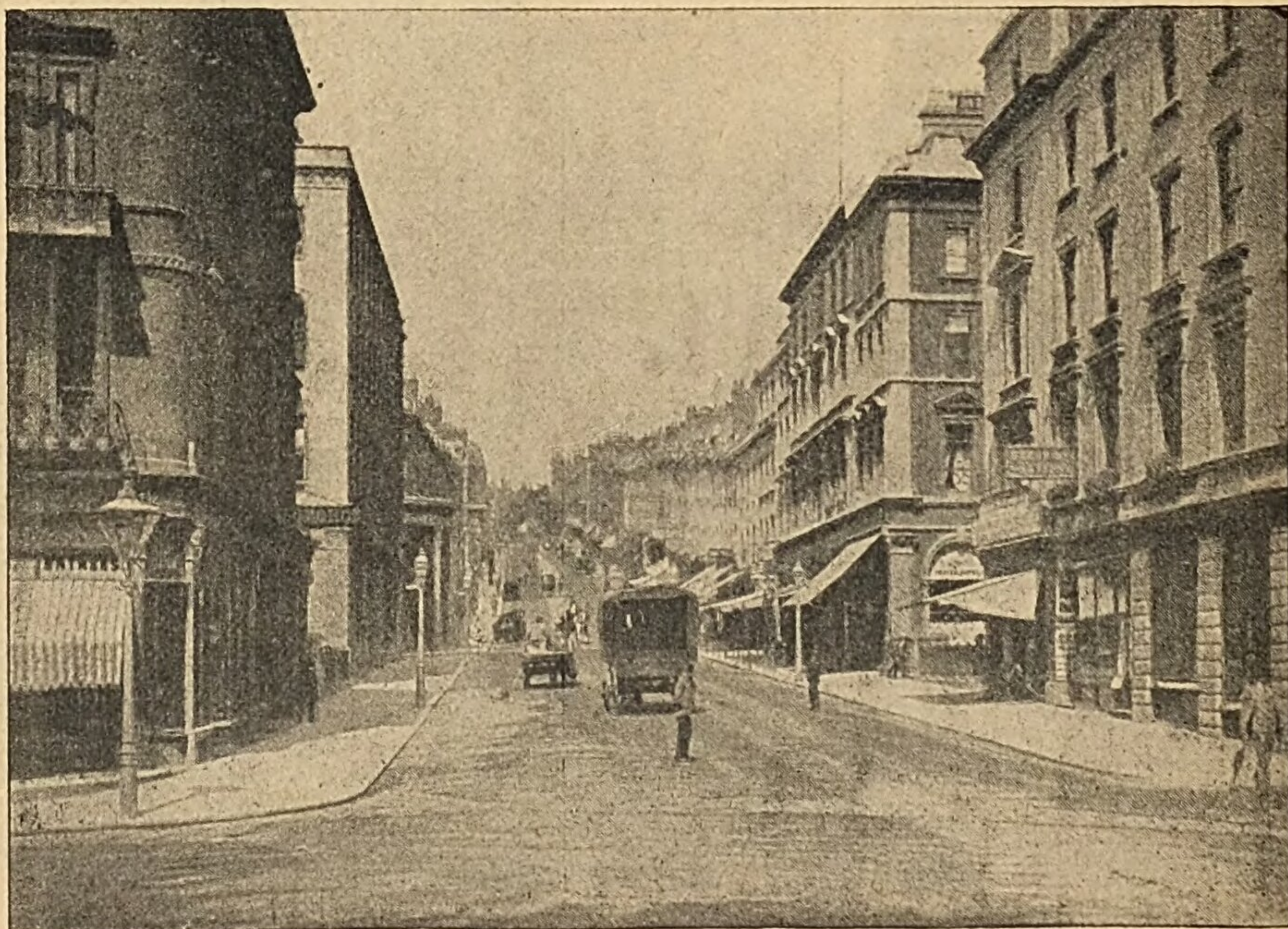


THE CATHEDRAL AND QUEEN'S STATUE.

across the drawbridge, and gently crawl up the gradient of St. Augustine's Parade to the beginning of Park Street, where they conveniently stop. The voyager has up to this time traversed a space of say, two hundred yards or so, and utilises this welcome break in the tedium of his journey by admiring his surroundings. And he is well repaid for any ocular exertion he may indulge in here, for this is one of the handsomest parts of a city that has many noticeable corners. He gets a view of the busy operatives employed in turning the great trench—now only figuratively crossed by the drawbridge—into the finest open space likely to be projected in the heart of any busy city. The trench in question has been often dammed—but this time effectually—and handsome gardens are soon to take the place of an abominable stretch of stagnant water, that has long since

lived its day and given up its smells. But to return to our omnibus, which we will find still resting at the spot where we metaphorically left it.

On the left you get a fine view of Bristol Cathedral, a handsome structure with a central tower having all the appearance of being cut off in its prime. Adjoining is one of the finest old Norman gateways extant, with a wealth of associations and rich carvings. One of Bristol's few hotels and the old Church of St. Augustine assert themselves on the other side of the Cathedral. Opposite, between them and you and the 'bus, in the centre of this College Green, is a pretty public garden, containing a highly flattering statue of Her Majesty the Queen, in an impossible position, with a ball—I am not sure if it is of fire—in one hand, and a richly carved shillelagh in the other; and to crown all, the queerest of head-dresses. It represents Jubilee rejoicing in its most monumental form. And then—straight ahead, the awe-inspiring brae of Park Street.



PARK STREET.

During the interval of rest, opportunity has been taken to attach a few more horses, generally two, to the little 'bus, and with much "gee-uping" and straining of sinew, the ascent begins. When it is terminated, and with the fine stretch of the Triangle—which puts on some bold shop-fronts in honour of the event—in front of us, with the Museum and Library, and the pretty buildings of the Blind Asylum and the Salisbury Conservative Club all on our right, another stoppage is indulged in—and the rest is—a gentle frequently-broken trot up into and through Clifton, passing the really beautiful Fine Art Gallery and the stately Victoria Rooms *en route*. The journey through Clifton is one long vista of fine houses, noble churches, and choice gardens—past an array of

enticing shops, up to the Suspension Bridge and into a veritable garden of delightful surroundings.

Now, for a holiday trip, these four-horse coach rides are to be recommended. They afford ample time to chat *de omnibus rebus*. But fancy their existence as rapid transits across town!

I have now only left me the local cab supply. It is efficient—numerically, and the four-wheelers cab-rank as high as they do anywhere—if not higher. They are certainly hired. But here as elsewhere that exemplification of the Darwinian theory as applied to cabs is demonstrated, in which the “hansom” is proving the fittest—and the fastest. The latter are the most uncomfortable I have ever sat and chafed in—and chaffed out. The body is thrown back at an angle of some fifteen degrees, which is acute in its painfulness, and makes the parting with it and the half-crown (which appears to be the minimum fare in this wealthy old city) a thing of gladness.

If I have railed unduly at the Bristol tramcar—and its road accompaniments—let it not be visited unduly upon me. For I have suffered much, in obtaining these, my experiences of them.

CHAPTER IX.

ON CHARITIES.

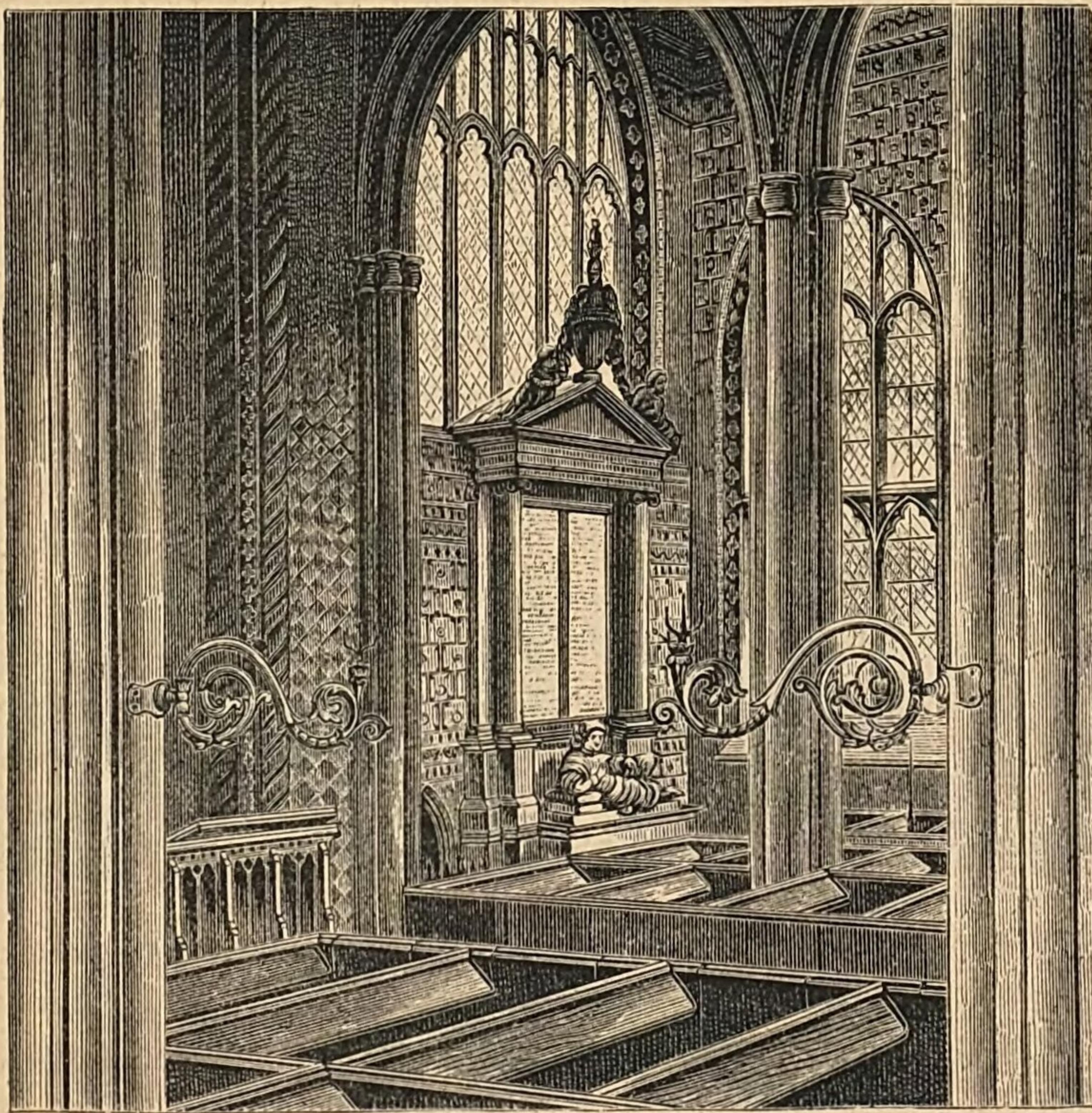
THE prodigality of munificence which is alike the pride and distinctiveness of the wealthy citizens of Bristol, is remarkable. It is but a heritage left to existing Bristolians by those who have gone before, and, I am glad to chronicle, is worthily maintained. I do not think that any city in our common country can show such a truly moving record of princely bequests and bountiful charities as are the fortunate inheritance of this one. Many of Bristol's sons—past and present—have been and are still, undemonstrative, unselfish workers in what is usually a field-review for self-advertisement—that of bestowing by those who have, upon those who have not.

The word charity with a Bristolian is synonymous with the word Colston. This most remarkable man, one of the greatest examples history furnishes of worthy and conscientious citizenship, was born in Temple Street, Bristol, on November 2nd, 1636. He was *the* great shipowner of his time, and amassed a considerable fortune in the trade with Spain and the East Indies. He is said never to have insured and never to have lost a single ship of his fleet—but then this is an historical record. What is certain is, that he founded many great charities and endowed them liberally; and to this day, many thousands of Bristolians are all the better, materially, for his good work. His memory is kept ever-green by the three great banquets partaken of simultaneously on every anniversary of that grand old man's birthday, by the three local societies which exist for the purpose. A considerable amount of money is subscribed at these gatherings, and devoted to charitable funds, so the feast of reason accompanied by the flowing bowl is here turned to unusually good purposes. Edward Colston died on October 11th, 1721, leaving a world he had greatly enriched both by his example and his gifts.

Colston Hall is a veritable monument in stone to the great philanthropist, and was erected on the site of the old Colston Schools he founded. In the Church of All Saints his stone presentment figures. So even Colston left enemies.

The "charities" of Bristol are legion. They are almost unenumeratable. So persistent has been the largesse, and frequently so indiscriminate, that it is more than possible that the want of independence which so notably characterises the poor of the city—their absolute dependence—is the result of fostering with such prodigality the advantages of "receiving" over "working-for," in their minds. In other words, people prefer being poor to being industrious.

But standing out like a Titan, head and shoulders above all other efforts at relieving the wants of the helpless and dependent—not only as represented in Bristol, but in the wide world—is the most remarkable, almost incomprehensible work and homes of George Müller. What has aptly been termed by another incursionist into Bristol—"a City of the Orphans" has been established on Ashley Down, near Bristol. A veritable colony of orphans on a perfectly wholesale scale is here housed, educated, and provided for, and the whole gigantic work is run upon the most unusual lines. It is remarkable history, but it is singularly true, and I will give the extraordinary details.



INTERIOR OF ALL SAINTS', SHOWING COLSTON'S MONUMENT.

George Müller, a poor Prussian, who had come to England in connection with some missionary work, had settled in Bristol. In the year 1835 he first conceived that it was his duty to do something towards housing the numerous orphans Bristol gave shelter, or no shelter, to. At this period Mr. Müller was a minister to a small sect known as the Brethren. He was living in comparatively healthy poverty—for he received no stipend for his ministration—at No. 6, Wilson Street, and in connection with his pet project, he turned this house into an orphanage. In a few weeks he found himself the voluntary parent by adoption of twenty-six children, who had involuntarily lost both theirs by right of birth.

And now a remarkable incident, the most extraordinary—if not the only—proof of

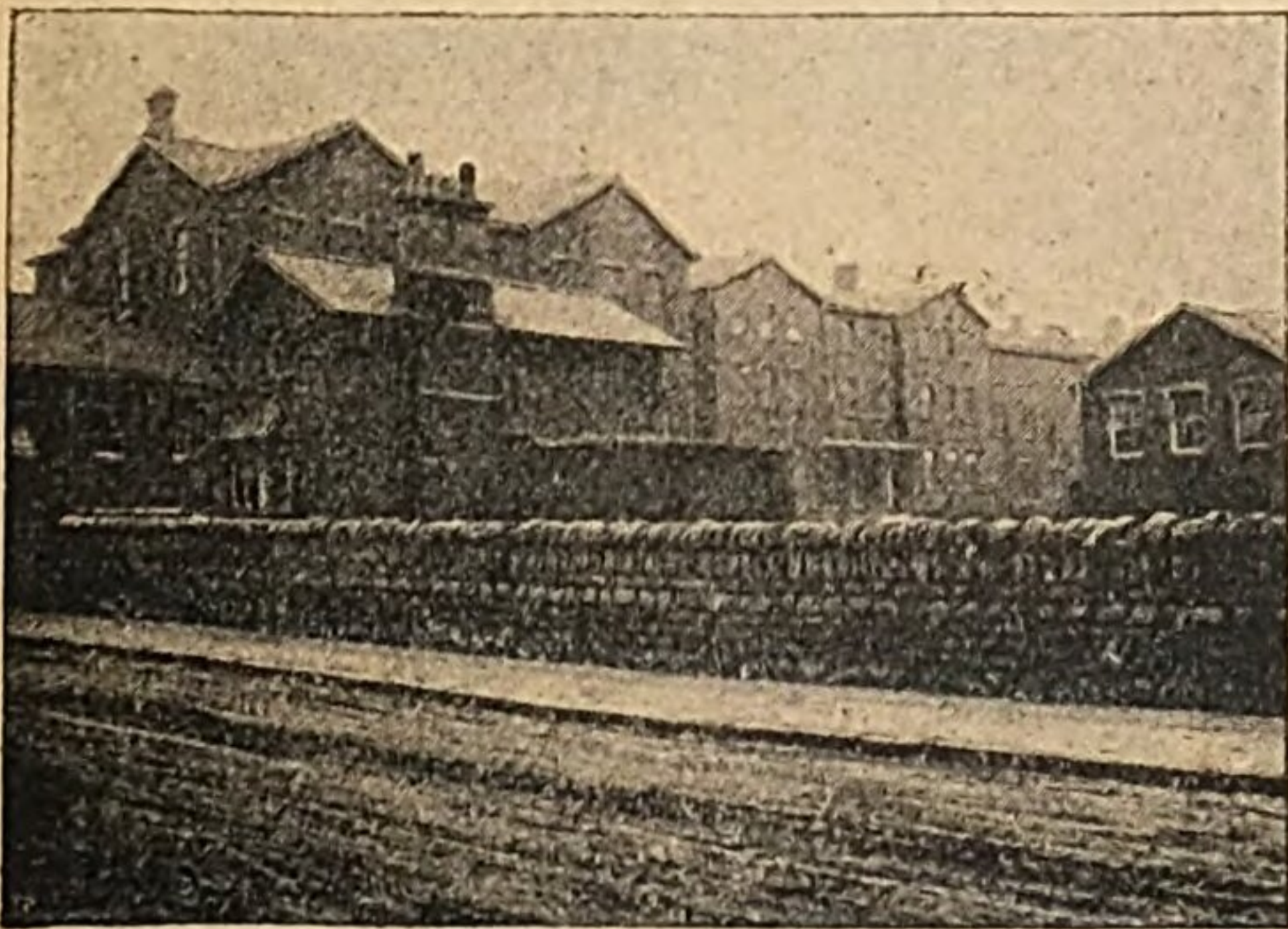
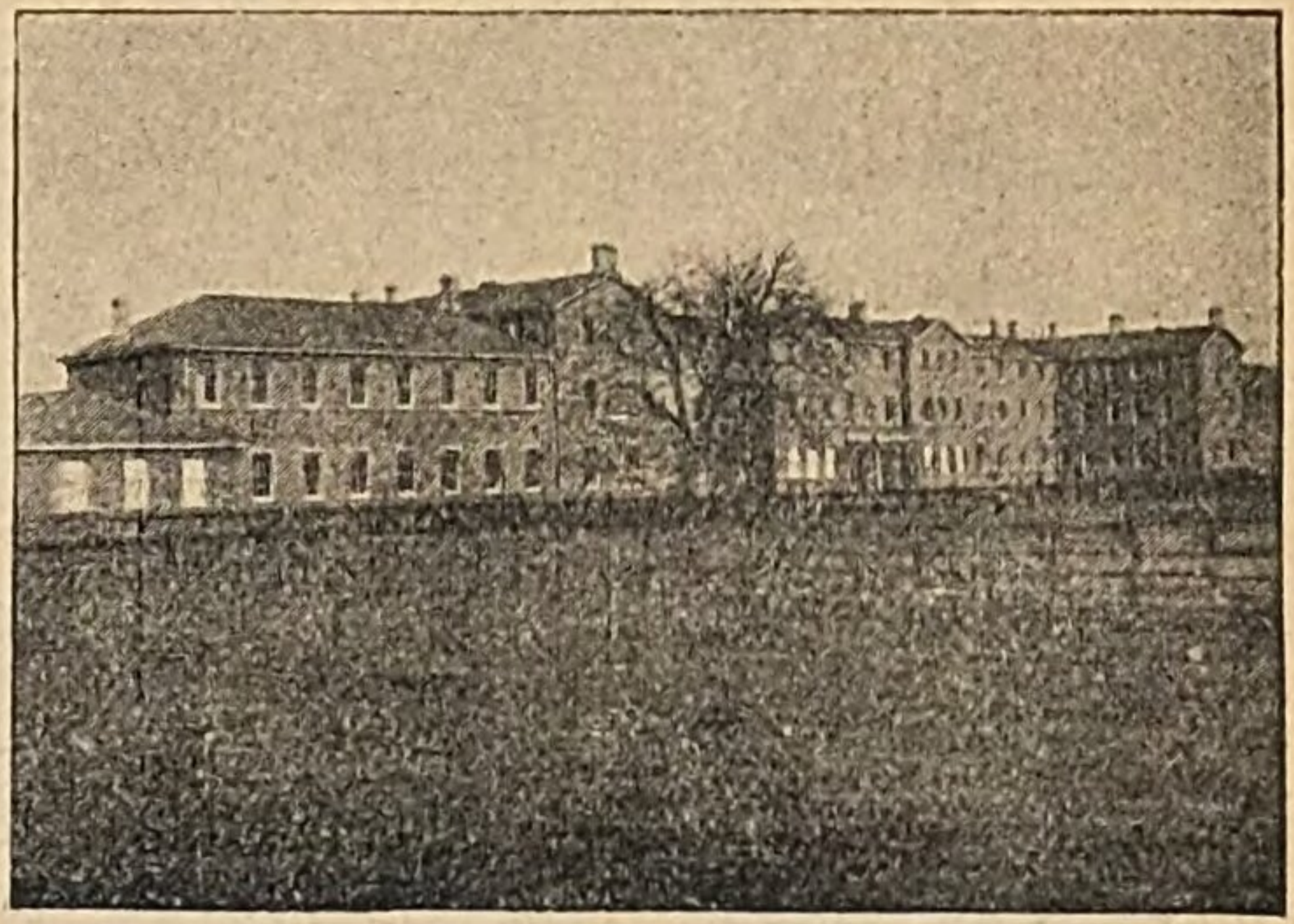
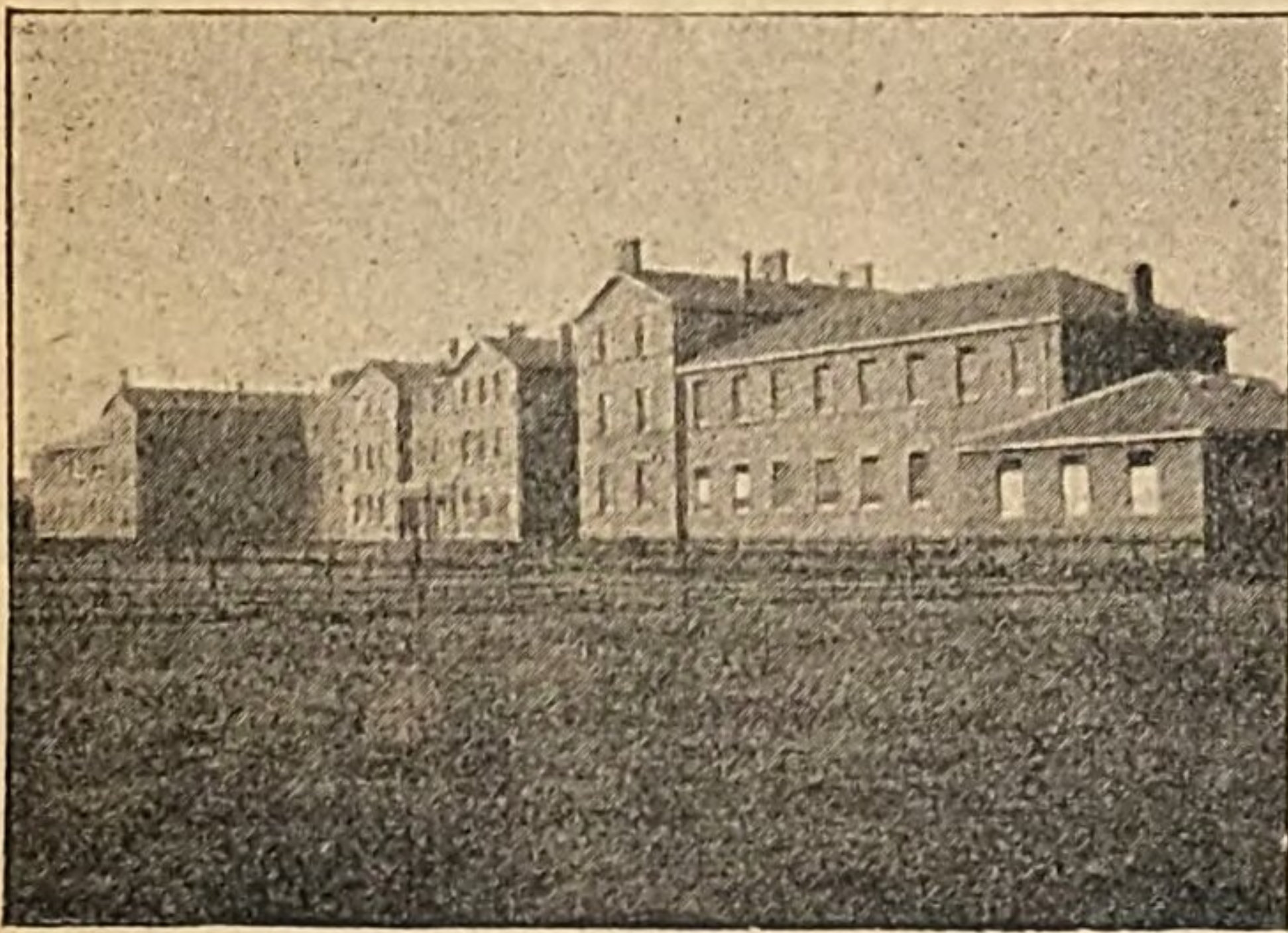
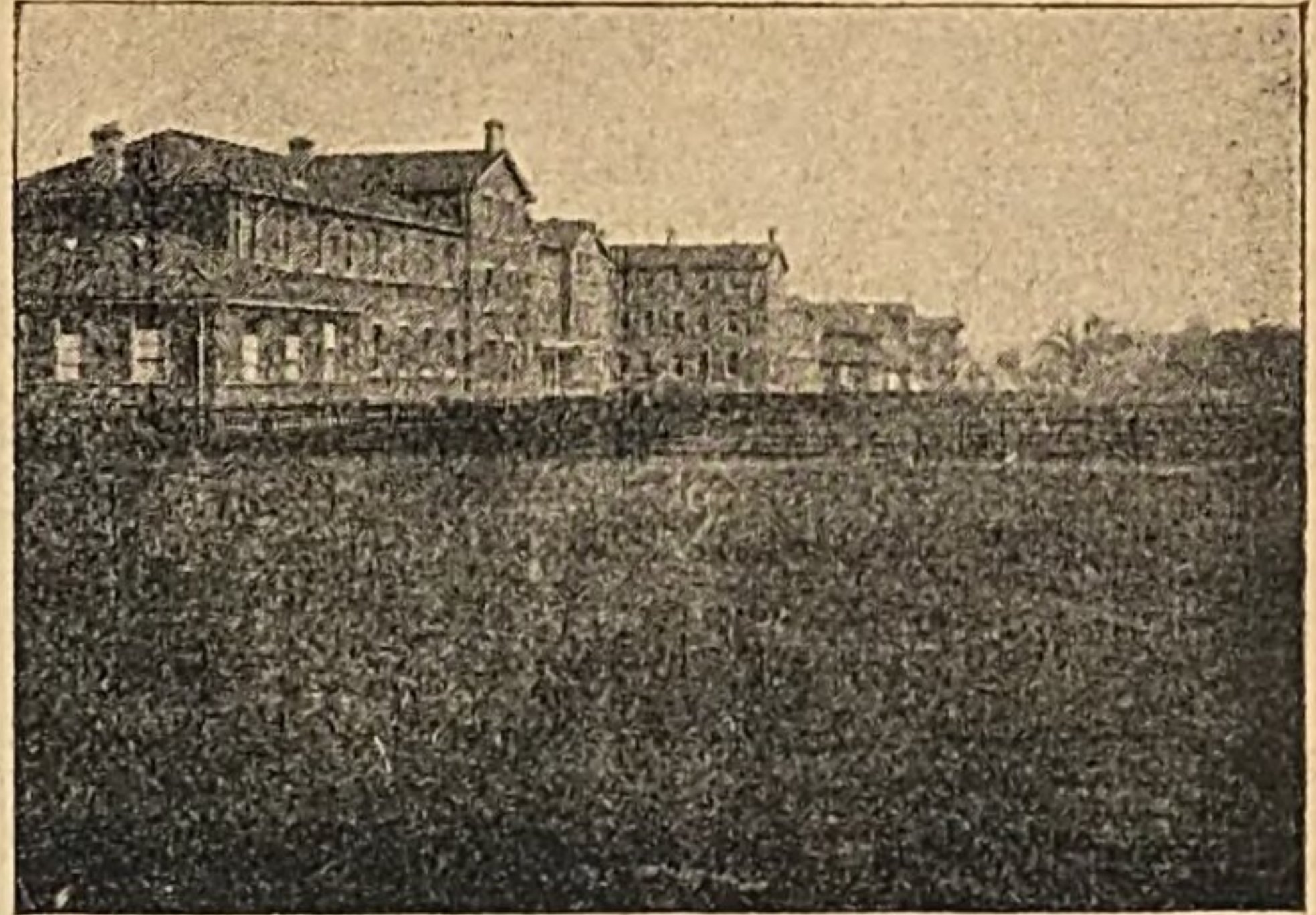
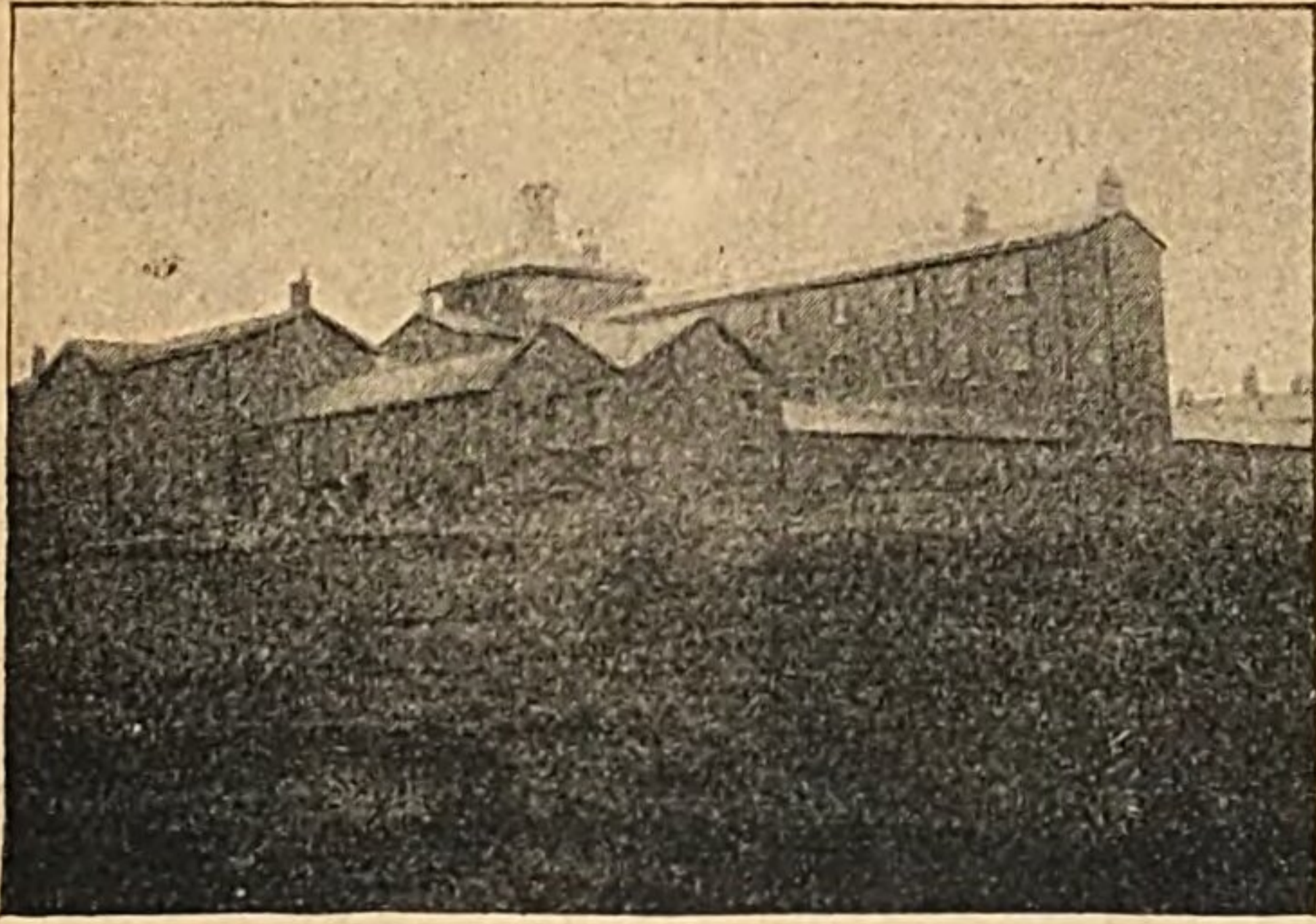
success in a doctrine of pure faith, in contradistinction to any ordinary common-sense or business-like methods, I have ever encountered.

Mr. Müller was an absolutely poor man, without income or the wherewithal to provide for himself. His position was not bettered by his newly-undertaken family. The question of ways and means must have made itself felt even to so unpractical a person as himself. But he had never asked man or woman for aught for himself; and he resolved to carry out and on the same principle with respect to his orphans. What was apparently additionally suicidal was his resolution never to make known publicly the sources whence he might receive his supplies for his charitable work. So what many people considered with some show of reason nothing but a freak of fanaticism on the part of Mr. Müller, was floated upon principles that other people thought impossible in connection with such an institution. The fact that they were wrong is the strange thing, which, like Lord Dundreary, no fellow can understand. For I will be able to show that Mr. Müller's strange trust was not misplaced. A tribute, stronger than any comment, to the credit of the good and charitable qualities to be found in a much abused world.

For supplies came in from all quarters—in food, in clothing, and in funds. And this strange Mr. Müller was so satisfied with his experiment, and so confident of its successful continuance, that he rented another house, and filled it with parent-less occupants. Nobody was asked for anything: no one was thanked for giving. That numerous class who give because it is a profitable advertisement in the newspapers, found no outlet for their generous vanity here. But they may have given, all the same. It may have had the effect upon their natures that the intimation *not* to read a thing has upon the victims of the wily and human-nature-studying advertiser. I have always been of opinion that the world would of necessity have been less sinful had the Decalogue been drawn up in the insistory as opposed to the desistory sense, had “Thou shalt!” taken the place of “Thou shalt not!” For it is to be feared that human nature was much the same in the days of Moses, as in our own.

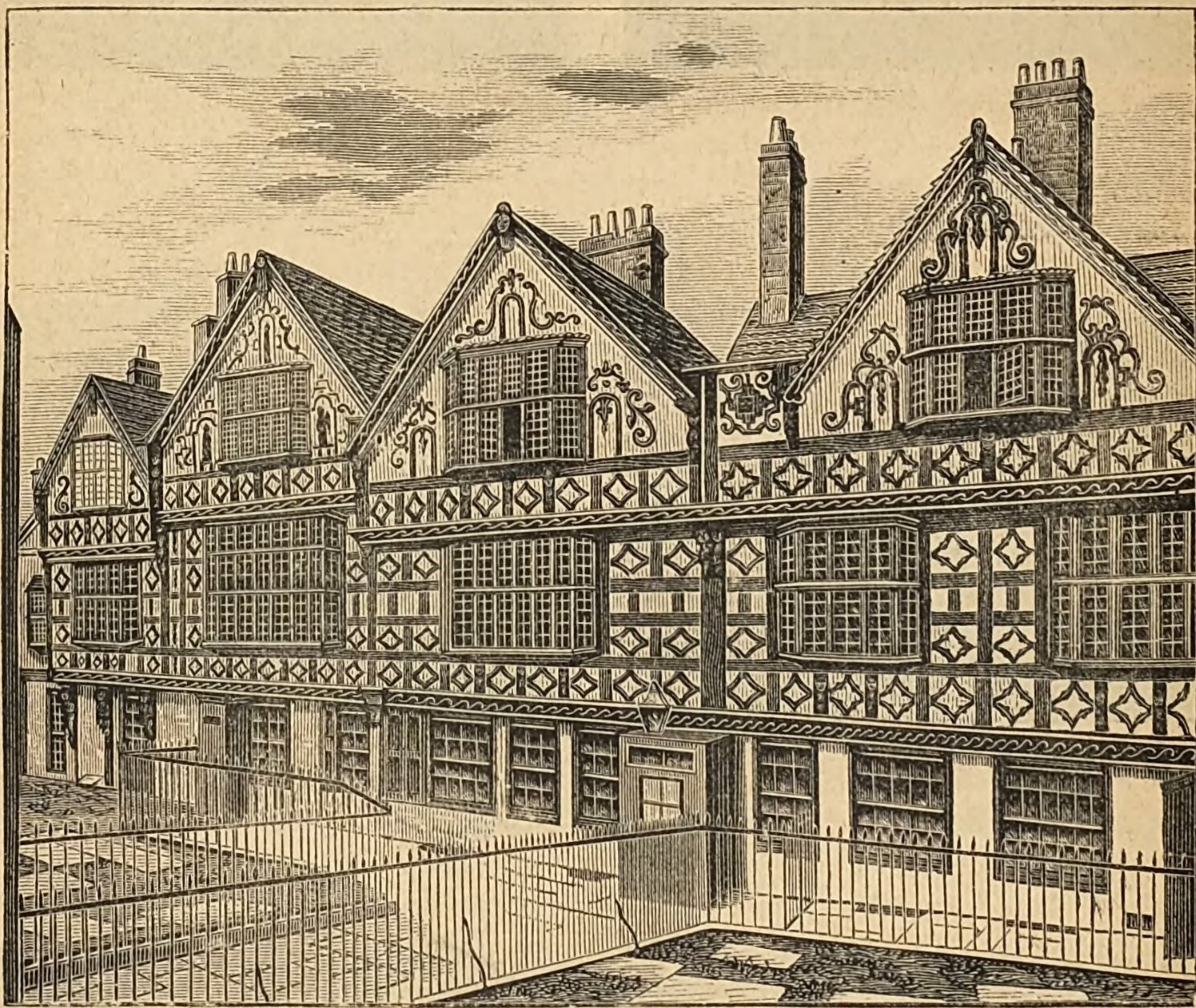
There were many times when Mr. Müller had not the means to provide for the day's outlay, for he never contracted a debt. But the good fairy of these miniature orphanages never deserted them, and the necessary was invariably forthcoming. A third house was opened, and before the close of that year—1837—Mr. Müller was responsible for the well-being of seventy-five young children. The phenomenal character of the Institution was the only advertisement it received: but it sufficed. A fourth house was opened in 1843, and then the awkwardness of providing suitable accommodation for so many children in these ill adapted houses became strikingly manifest. These four large houses were filled with boys whom Mr. Müller had saved from the unknown horrors that await the great army of the “not wanted,”—with hundreds of girls saved from what in their case must have been even worse. And all this the work of a poor unassuming foreigner, who never asked anyone for anything, and promised nothing but that reward which is virtue's own to those who assisted him. But even his most enthusiastic supporters took fright when, without a single penny for the purpose, Mr. Müller proposed to *build* an orphanage to accommodate his “family” more suitably.

But the good work went on: seven acres of ground were purchased at Ashley Down,



MÜLLER'S ORPHANAGES, ASHLEY DOWN.

and in June, 1849, the removal of the children from the Wilson Street houses was accomplished, the new building, which had cost £14,500, was paid for, and Mr. Müller had £500 in hand. Nothing succeeds like blind belief in faith—once in a way—and Mr. Müller soon set about the erection of another and larger building, to accommodate an additional 700 orphans. The law of supply and demand—in orphans—not working in this case, the original plan was extended into two buildings, with proportionate additional accommodation, which were opened in 1855 and 1857 respectively. The responsibility and expenditure of keeping up these establishments and their occupants were now enormous, so this strange



ST. PETER'S HOSPITAL.

Mr. Müller—who ought to have been an Irishman—straightway set about the erection of another two buildings, to accommodate some 900 more children, and these were opened in 1868 and in 1870 respectively. It cost £115,000 to erect the different buildings on Ashley Down, and the annual expenditure upon their support is over £25,000. It is to the glory of our race that this good work has never had to stop for want of funds—though—such is the irony of fate, that at the time of my writing, the Institutions are badly in need of support. Surely such a fact has but to be known to do away with any further cause for its existence! But those responsible for the Ashley Down

Orphanages do not cry out for help, and help therefore—in spite of faith—does not always come.

This is not a local question, although it is of local pride and inception. It affects the whole of the greater outside world with its unknown quantum of people with hearts to feel, with eyes to water, with hands to give. The work of this beneficent God-fearing man will live long after him, reflecting the rays of its beatifying mission upon all those unknown ones who have helped to make Müller's Orphanages what they are—on those upon whom rests the good work of keeping them still in a state of sufficiency and efficiency.

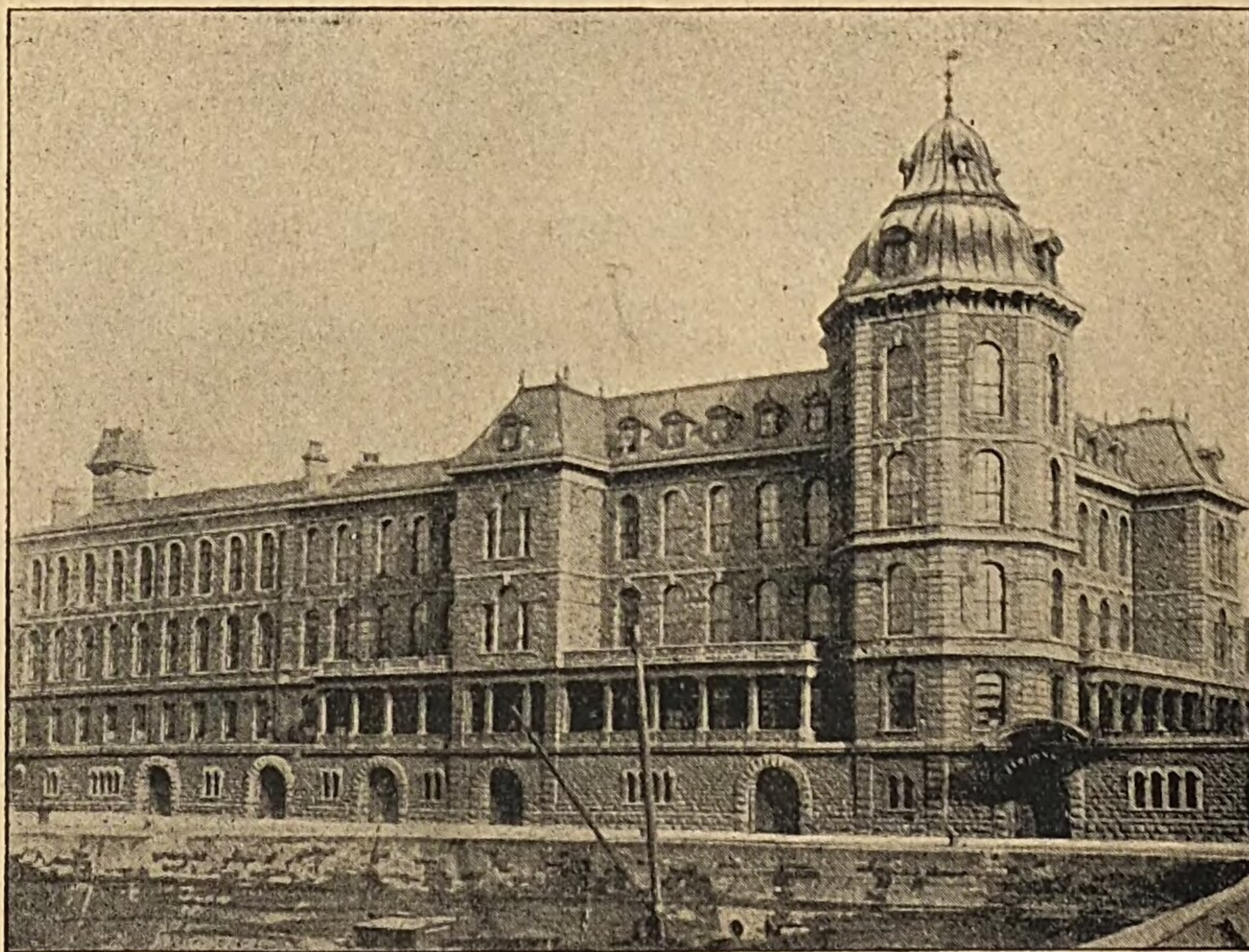
The thousands of fatherless and motherless infants—of all denominations and beliefs, or want of them—saved from the grapple with poverty and crime, and restored to society tutored and fit for any good work their callings may demand from them, are factors in the cause of this stupendous charity which call with a thousand voices for the attention of all who can appreciate what such work means. If only on account of its absorption of George Müller and his “orphans,” Bristol stands out for meritorious notice far above all other places, and in a manner which makes all its mere earthly faults as if they never were. It is Bristol's heritage—this great “City of the Orphans”—a possession worth many times more than all its pecuniary cost has entailed. Then let Bristol look to it and see that there shall be no lack of energy, no lack of means, to endow this great work as long as the unfortunate necessity for it lasts. If I may be permitted to make an appeal, I will address it to all readers of *Greater Bristol*—not the less because it is intended for the inhabitants of Bristol, more. It is not because Bristolians ought to do for themselves what others ought not to do for them. It is because their local and immediate interest is stronger.

They are thrice blessed who give to the most extraordinary philanthropic Christian-like work of our century, and of any country. George Müller is an old man now, and his active work is done. He lives but to watch over the growth of his labours, and to take a loving pride in their value. There should not be a poor man nor a rich man unable to contribute to this remarkable and almost isolated instance of peace and goodwill on earth personified in actual nineteenth century life. The world would well deserve to want—if Müller's Orphanages do.

CHAPTER X.

ON HOSPITALS.

I AM pleased to report that Bristol is excellently well hospitalled. Paradoxical as it may seem, some of my pleasantest hours were spent in visiting the many institutions which in Bristol minister to the damaged and the sick. The pleasant feelings in question were due more to the practical effect of seeing good work done, than to any purely



GENERAL HOSPITAL.

human gratification of self. Hospitals and kindred institutions are brought into being—and kept there—by the philanthropic zeal of the people—or certain of them—among whom they work. And I have already shown how well Bristolians have ever understood the saving qualities of generous donorship. There is such completeness and excellence about the voluntarily supported medical institutions of Bristol, that my practical acquaintance with them made me resolve—should stern necessity arise in physical



FEMALE STAFF, GENERAL HOSPITAL.

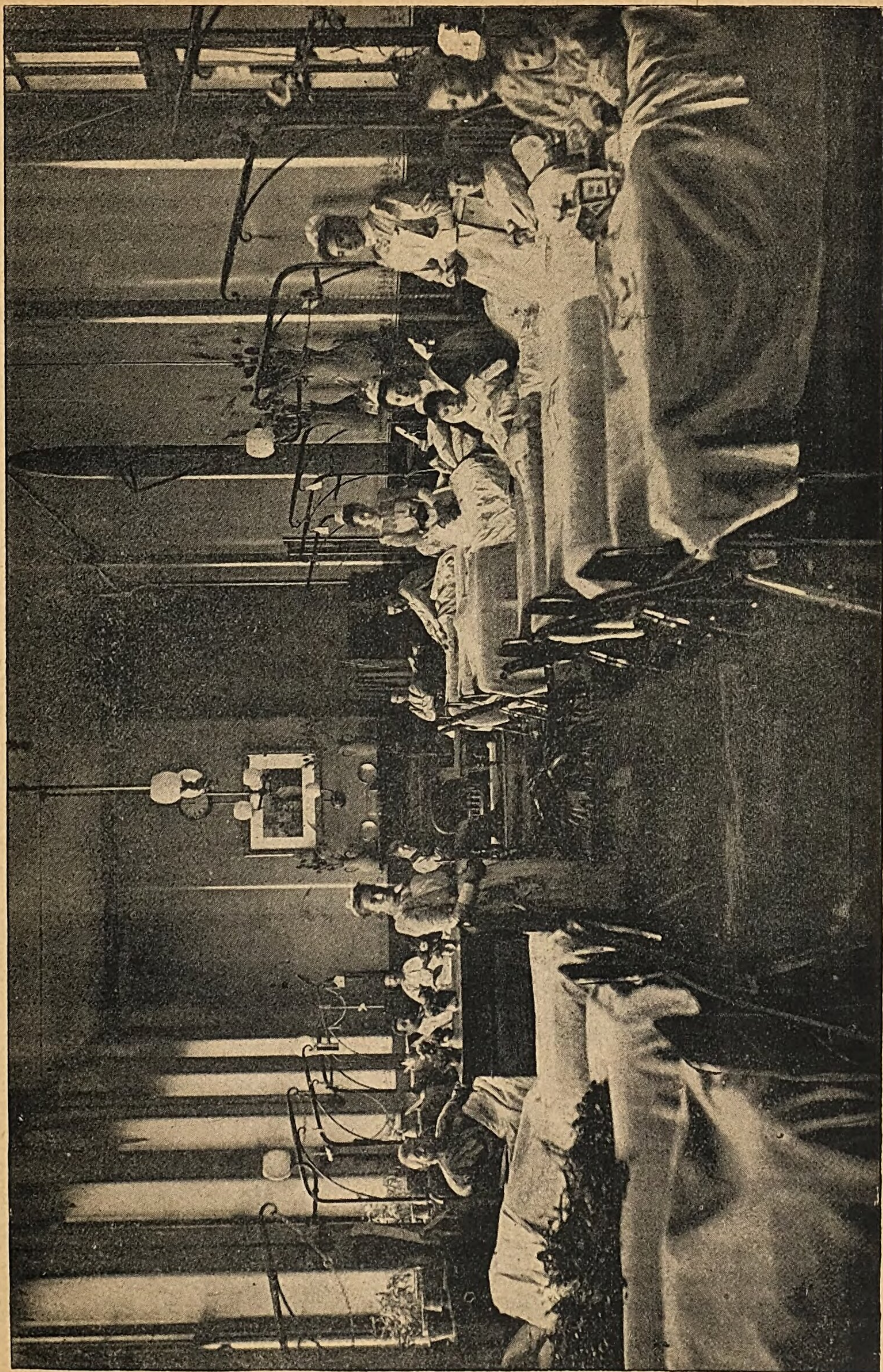
damage or other causes of inconvalescence—to take up not too temporary quarters in, say—The General Hospital of this city

The General Hospital is well deserving of premier notice, if only because any remarks anent it must perforce be of so favourable a character, as to make anything of an unpleasant nature which it may be my duty in due course to let fall, partake of the composition of a well-sugared pill. The position this fine building holds in my esteem is only equalled by that upon which it stands, which, for its purpose, is almost unequalled. It is a really handsome stone structure, beautifully designed, and picturesquely situated upon one of the sides of the great Floating Harbour—one of its clean sides. A pretty panorama of busy shipping is afforded from all the windows overlooking “this side up” the Bathurst basin.

The inception of this noble institution was due in the main to members of the Society of Friends, who in Bristol, as elsewhere, are distinguished for their good work among their fellows. The promoters purchased a house in Guinea Street, where a golden opportunity presented itself in 1832, and provided thirty beds. In consequence of the condition of this property, which required vigorous hospitalling itself, it was resolved in 1850 to erect an appropriate building. This was completed in 1858, at a cost of nearly £30,000. Almost the whole of this was provided by the public spirit of a few gentlemen, prominent among whom were Mr. Joseph Eaton and Mr. George Thomas. An enlarged out-patient department and new isolated wards, with a museum and library, were added in 1873, at a cost of £9,000. In 1882 a new and most complete system of drainage, and a reflooring of the wards with wood in place of cement, were commenced, and completed at a cost of £9,300. The urgent need of such an Institution by the city is shown when I state that in the years 1889, 1890, and 1891, 1,517 cases were refused admission as in-patients for want of room. New wards for forty extra beds and a nurses’ home were added by 1891, and cost about £17,000 to provide. The wing containing them was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh, and named after him.

The Hospital contains every modern known appliance associated with its ministrations. It relieves over 15,000 patients annually, and possesses one of the best medical staffs in the kingdom. The scrupulous cleanliness and absence from dulness everywhere in the building were most noticeable to me, not a little of this artificial sunshine being due to the pure, kindly, and intelligent faces of the Sisters and Nurses. These good women, who have given up to nursing the charms and the solicitude intended for a portion of mankind, are, in my eyes, the nearest approach to the perfect in humanity we are likely to reach in this vale of tears. To see them at their work is a liberal education, and if others could only do so, and would only take the trouble to interest themselves sufficiently to see how much pain and suffering is relieved and dispelled, and by what methods, in Institutions like this, it and most others would not be in the regrettable position of disbursing more as expenditure than they receive as largesse.

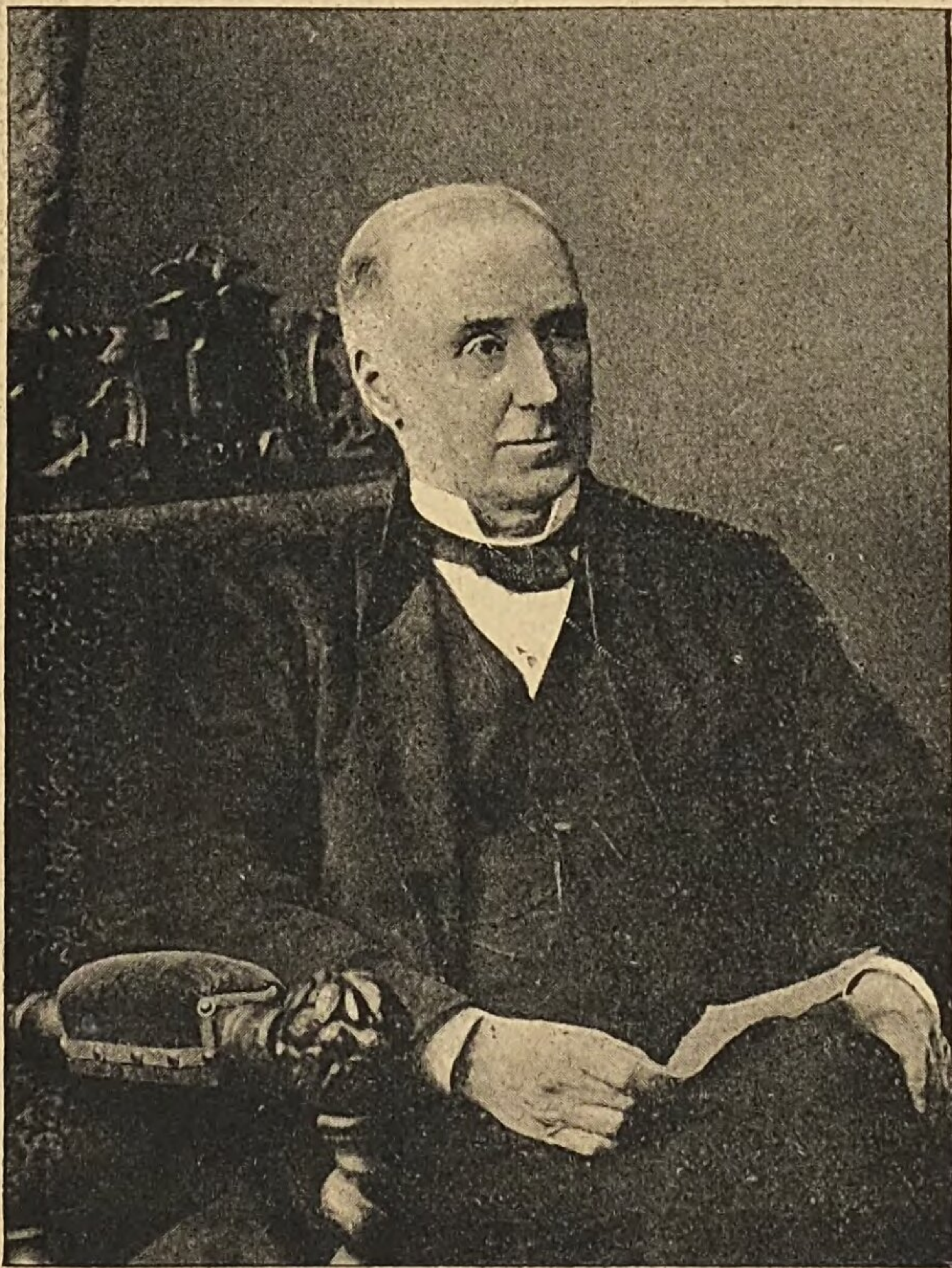
The wards are almost equally interesting, and each contains a number of beds, their occupants, and the grateful presence of a Sister and two Nurses. Of the one associated with the name of the present Chairman of the Institution—Joseph Storrs Fry—I carried



THE JOSEPH STORRS FRY WARD, GENERAL HOSPITAL.

away a more than passing impression, which I have shared with all the readers of this book. Mr. Fry is a good bit of "old Bristol"—equally guide, philanthropist, and Friend.

I never regretted my usual good-health until this visit, when I first realised, in conversing with one of the comely Sisters, how much I could have gained from a broken leg or two. The "theatre" I considered a most suitable scene for operations, and the photographic presentments of the available staff—male and female—were obtained within its congenial walls. But there was something exceptional about this operation, inasmuch as no one appeared cut-up in consequence.



JOSEPH STORRS FRY.

As a set off to its nursing staff, the Hospital possesses a veritable Chamber of Horrors in its museum. I was in a rare pickle myself when I had looked at the contents of its glass-bottles. Pickled tongues and pickled hearts are customary things—when they are not as they are here—human in character. But I will not further expatiate upon the contents of this room. It had a sobering effect, this vision of so many parts of men, in spirits. I felt—abstaining discoverer though I be—the necessity of lowering some others, to raise mine.

Place aux dames, so the name of the matron is Miss C. M. Bann, and her assistant is Miss Morris. Dr. R. V. Solly is house surgeon; Mr. D. C. Rayner is the assistant surgeon; Mr. Paul Star is the physician's assistant; Mr. W. Berry is the dispenser—

of all good things in the shape of medicine; Mr. W. Thwaites is the secretary; and Mr. J. M. Sheppard is the assistant secretary.

There is a special department for "Throats and Ears." This is under the charge of the local specialist in these trifles—Dr. Barclay J. Baron.

The Royal Infirmary is the most venerable of local asylums for the unwell, and in fact was the first institution of the kind in the kingdom (out of London) depending for support on voluntary subscriptions. It is a tremendous pile of dull, heavy buildings, with a gloomy exterior, and narrow and closely built surroundings of an anything but pleasant character. The feeling of gloom is one difficult to dispel all the building over,

though the arrangements are excellent, and the wards—if not so bright as those of the General Hospital—are yet clean and comfortable. Large sums of money have been spent at different times upon the improvement of this old building, but one cannot help believing that the purpose they were put to would more advantageously have been that of building a new infirmary. The Bristol people do not do all they should for this most excellent institution, and it has long ceased to know what it is to pay its way. Large sums of money have been subscribed to it in the past, but its great weakness lies in the



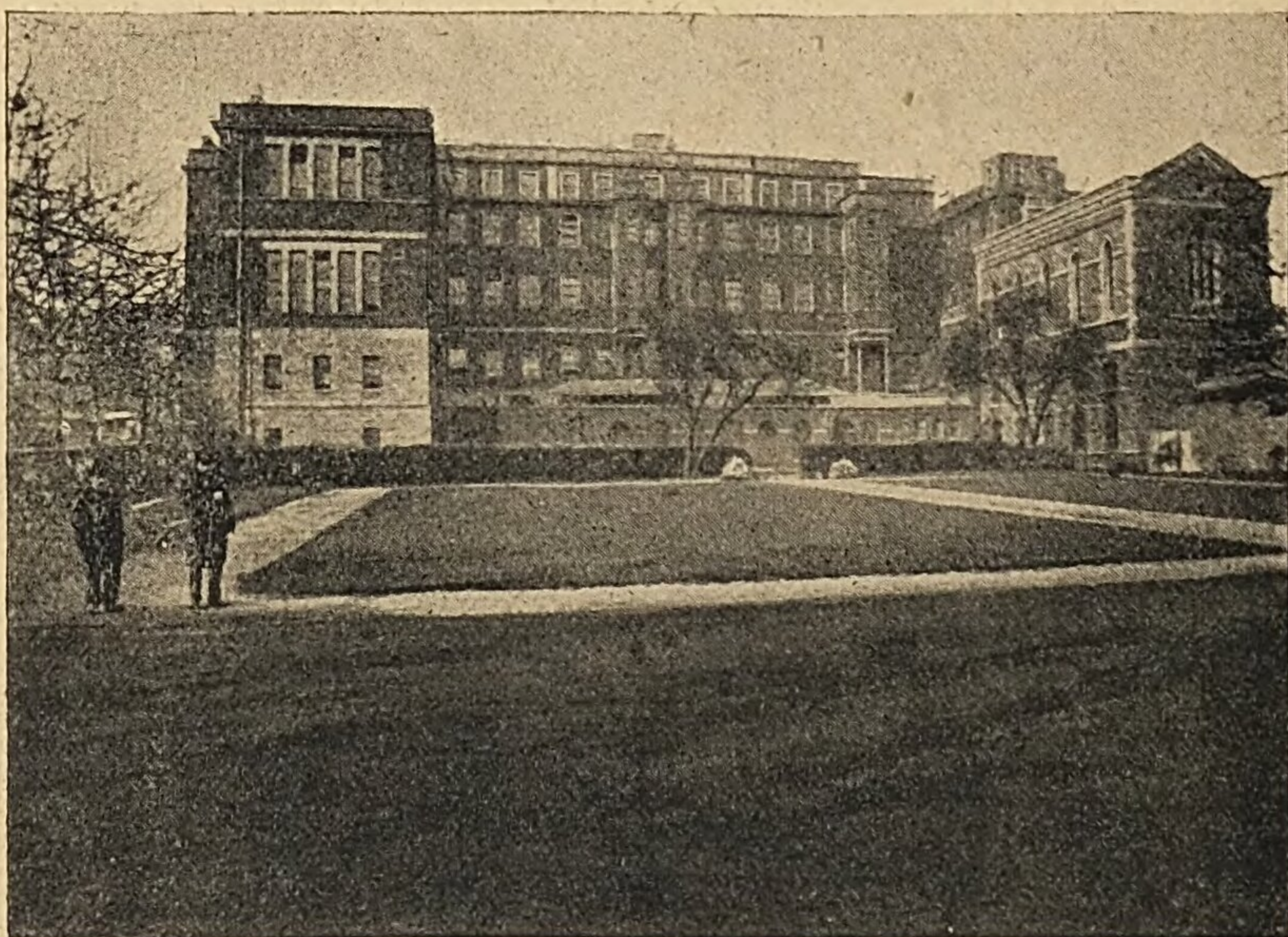
MALE STAFF, GENERAL HOSPITAL.

smallness of the number of its annual subscribers in the present, and the insufficiency of the amounts they subscribe. They do not in the least represent what such a wealthy city as Bristol should do in this direction, and one-half of the advantage, not to say *kudos*, attached to the possession of such magnificent institutions as this, is lost if they are not kept going generously.

This Infirmary was first founded in 1735, though the present building can only lay claim to an existence from 1781. Not that it is any the worse on that account. In 1876, £20,000 were spent in reorganizing its sanitary arrangements, and it is, in spite of its age, one of the best sanitated and ventilated public buildings in the country. The

chapel of the Institution is exceedingly pretty, and is enriched by a handsome stained glass window, erected to the memory of a brave young student who lost his life in the endeavour to save that of a diphtheria patient.

The number of persons relieved by the Infirmary as in, out, or casual patients, is over 60,000 annually. The children's ward in the Hospital is a model of what such places should be. It is amply supplied with flowers and birds in cages, and all the children have toys. Here, as in the other wards, the walls are ornamented with paintings, some of them of value. The garden at the back of the building is a fine open space, and there is plenty of room for tennis and croquet. There is a mortuary—which I felt to be of too grave a nature for inspection.



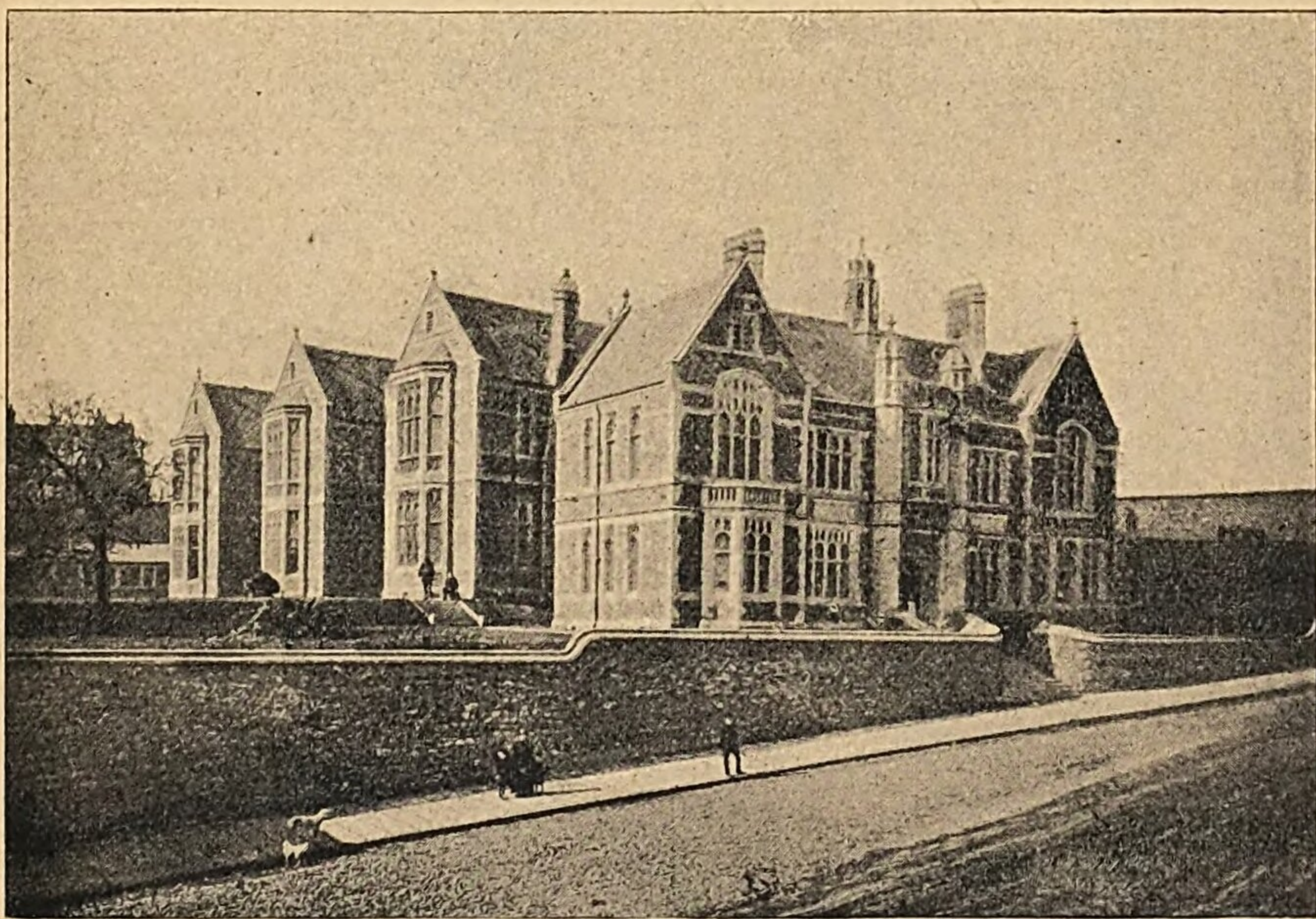
BACK VIEW OF ROYAL INFIRMARY.

But for absolute charm of surroundings, of accoutrement, and design, the beautiful building at the top of St. Michael's Hill is transcendently superior to all others. This is the Bristol Hospital for Sick Children and Women, and is a credit to its founders and the city. It contains 102 beds, most of them occupied by children of tender years, and suffering from almost every known variety of ills that a child's flesh is heir to. It is by far the handsomest hospital I have ever seen, and is bright to a degree—as a Child's Hospital should be. This beautiful Institution was founded in 1865, mainly through the good offices of Mark Whitwell, Esq., J.P., the present President. The Hospital arrangements are perfect, separate wards being reserved for special diseases, all the infectious ones being confined in a detached building in the charming gardens. The corridors are handsome, ornamented by stained-glass windows and fine statuary. In its way it is quite a little art gallery, and if Bristolians generally knew of its manifold beauties and value,

they would wipe out its deficit. For it also is in want of money. Everything possible is done not only to make its many youthful inmates (for its "women" patients are very few) better, but happier, and "toyland" is represented in its most lavish entirety in the wards.

The staff consists of the House Surgeon, Colston Wintle, a young and courteous gentleman, who, in showing me round the Institution, betrayed his great pride in everything about it; Matron; three Sisters; and the Nurses, all of whom I heartily congratulate upon the beautiful building in which they labour—and labour well.

There are several other similar Institutions, notably, The Bristol and Clifton Dispensary; The Bristol Dispensary, Castle Green; The Bristol Eye Dispensary; The Bristol Female



CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

Misericordia Society; The Bristol Medical Missionary Society; The Clifton Dispensary; The Eye Hospital; The Deaf and Dumb Asylum, and several others. The quaint old-world building of St. Peter's Hospital is used in a strangely double sense, for Lying-in purposes. That part of it which is not Hospital is utilised as head-quarters of the Bristol Poor Law Guardians. But I have written enough to show how nobly this old city is supplied with such goodly places. I hope I have also written sufficient to urge the citizens to do more for them.

CHAPTER XI.

ON AMUSEMENTS.

THE Bristolian is Englishman enough to enjoy his amusements sadly. He is never respectable less, because he is entertained the more. There must be a large proportion of the inhabitants of this city who hold that to enter the pit of a theatre is akin to a descent into Tophet. It were hard otherwise—taking both those valuable accessories to amusement into account, population and means—to explain the inadequacy of the supply of Theatrical entertainment. There are two Theatres in Bristol, both in their different walks being out of the ordinary run. But I will pursue this theme further on.

The first record of regular Theatrical performances in Bristol is placed in the year 1617, at what was termed “the Play-house in Wyne Street.” But many years prior to this the city had been visited by strolling players, and it is even thought that Shakespeare himself appeared with his own company in Bristol in 1597. In 1704 the strong Puritan element in the city interfered successfully, and the performance of stage-plays was prohibited. The Theatre Royal—about which I have much to say—was opened in 1766, and the announcement that it gave great satisfaction in its appointments forms a grim commentary upon the expectations of the period. The other existing Bristol Theatre is yeleft “The Prince’s,” and was opened in 1867. So much for the Theatrical past. Now for the actual living present.

The Prince’s Theatre is the fashionable play-house of Bristol, and is a handsome enough edifice. The auditorium is vast, and comfortable. It is a fine property, and, in its way, a monopoly. For the old Theatre Royal is mostly given over to the common or garden order of imbecile melodrama, and appeals eloquently to those who glory vociferously in the vanquishing of the villain, and who return home and give vent to their pent-up feelings—in beating their wives.

This Theatre is one of the oldest in England. It has a rather pretty auditorium, and has its entrances and its exits. But these latter are amazingly inadequate. So bewilderingly is the pit of this Theatre arranged, that it forms—in case of need—the most deliberate death-trap it has ever been my experience to view. But the dangers in front are visionary and safe-betting qualities, in comparison with those behind the curtain. Much has been heard in recent years, in a spasmodic sort of fashion, about the condition of the dressing-rooms in Theatres. If the condition of

those at the Theatre Royal, Bristol, were only understood by the people, and if it were possible to hold them up as examples, it would suffice to bring about such an inspection by the authorities as would for ever rid us of this atrocious state of things.

As far as *the* profession itself is concerned, this dressing-room question is out-and-out their gravest grievance. It is as much in want of ventilation as these dreadful dens are. All dressing-rooms are not alike; there are the good, the indifferent, and the very bad. I can only compare the inspection of the latter class of room to a

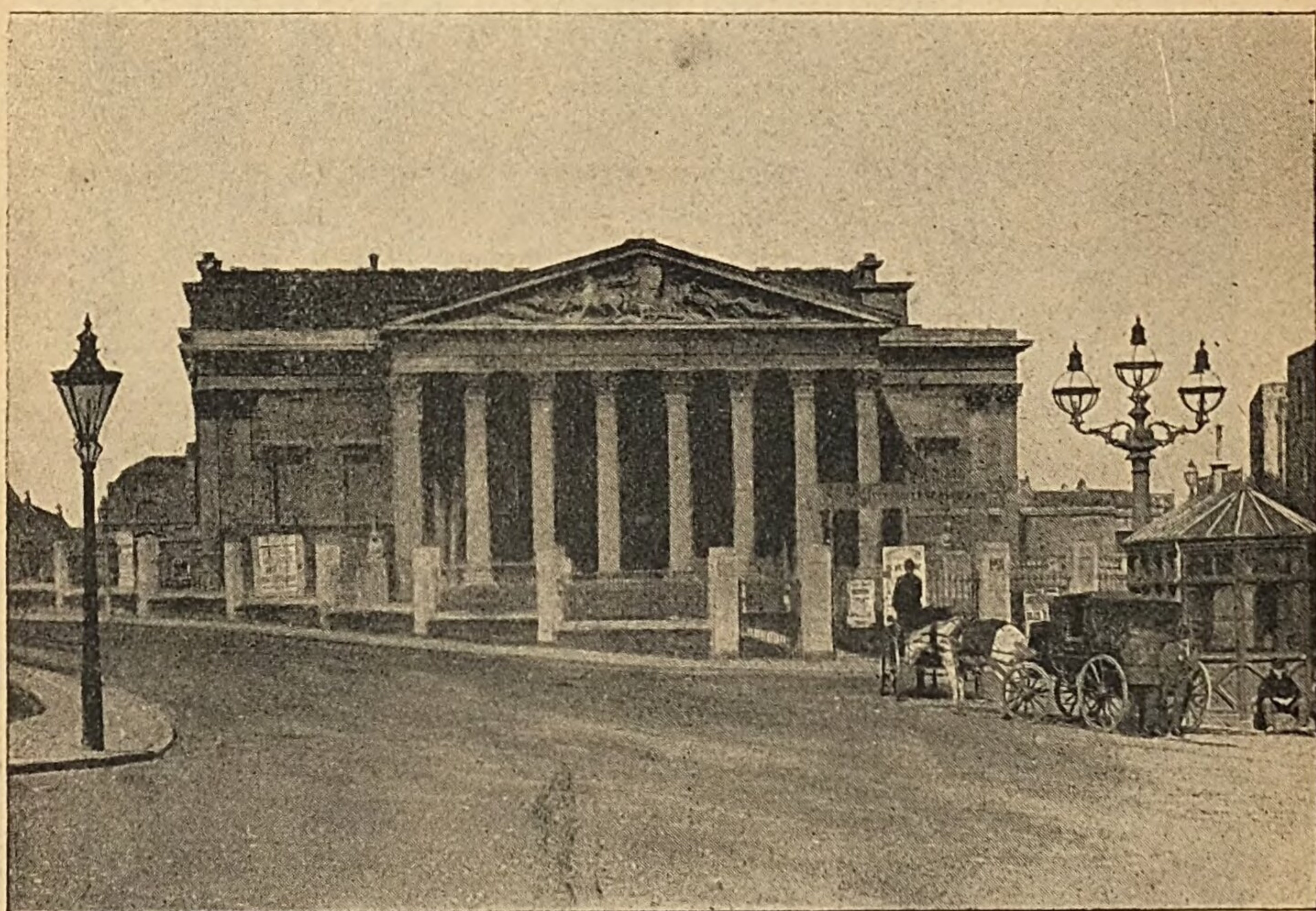


THEATRE ROYAL.

ramble over a manure farm. The very bad dressing-rooms, as a class, are dirty beyond all cleansing powers, rotten beyond all repair, positioned beyond the improvement of alteration, and are *sans* a pretence to even indecent sanitary arrangements. This last characteristic is, as a rule, simply devilish in its disgustingness, and should be cause and reason for the criminal prosecution of those responsible. There is no hope for this class of room. And surely but little for the poor unfortunate players whose hard fate it is to use them.

In my trips behind the scenes of such theatres (I am not making reference to the general conditions of the flooring), I witnessed ramshackledom and insanitation unequalled in the local slums. And yet, so much is all this taken as a matter of course, that what I have justly stigmatised as a disgrace to the community is not considered to be the business of the community. Surely it is as much a question of public morals and sanitation as an actors' grievance!

Among the other places of entertainment, other than those for "man and beast," is the Colston Hall, an ornamental quarry sacred to frequent organ recitals and occasional good concerts. These are held in its large Hall, as is also the organ, a fine instrument, containing as many stops as the building does draughts. It has necessarily bad acoustic



VICTORIA ROOMS.

properties, and the accommodation for the artists is very indifferent. But it can hold about 4,000 people in its cold embrace, and is responsible more than any other local influence for the profitable practice of medicine in Bristol. It has cost about £50,000, has the blue heavens above it, and large bonded-stores for spirits beneath. Then there is the Circus, a building without a frontage, midway between the Blind Asylum and the Museum and Library. It is given over to the antics of horses and clowns a few months in the year. The rest is silence. From the adjacent Victoria Rooms can be heard—on occasion—sounds of revelry by night; not too late at night, of course.

There are places of resort for those who are music-hally as opposed to those who are musically, inclined. And as if to compensate for my departure, that deplorable event

happened almost simultaneously with the opening of a new place of amusement, which would provide the "variety" the city must otherwise have lacked in my absence. And Bristol, in spite of what Bishop Ellicott may say, has at last a "Palace."

This is not a record of intellectual amusement for such a city as this. But it is the best in my power to present. Stage entertainments are not only serious things in Bristol, but the catering for their provision is equally so. In spite of the dearth, I honestly do not think that the city would support another Play-house. But the experiment should be worth the making. Bristolians might go to their work with more energy, if they went to the play with greater frequency

CHAPTER XII.

ON MUSIC.

FAR above things mundane, Bristol claims to be essentially musical. It is like unto a lyrical boa-constrictor, and has a great gorge once in three years. This is only one way music has of worming itself into the affections of the inhabitants. The city has not only its great triennial tuck-in, but the interim is diversified by spasmodic outbreaks of musical entertainments—assorted. These prove—as far as the local claim to musical pre-eminence goes—nothing. Though it savours neither of somnolence nor dyspepsia on the part of the loyal band of enthusiasts in the art beloved by Orpheus and the more respectable of the gods.

Bristol is always giving concerts, which, when cheap, and at a respectful distance from the classical, are phenomenally successful. The musical advance of the city is an ever-rising crescendo movement. Improvement upon past attempts characterises the efforts of to-day, to-morrow, and the next day. But the popular appreciation of music is purely artificial, and even that is the result of a strenuous education by enthusiastic leaders, which is bound to find its reward in increased appreciation of such artistic efforts—some day. It does not follow that a city which affords but lukewarm support to the drama should be lacking in proper musical appreciation. Such a conclusion goes in advance.

To my mind, all depends on what is meant by the term “musical.” The Bristolian who cannot tell the difference between “God Save the Queen” and the “Cujus Animam” may reasonably be put down as unmusical, even by those who shrink most from assuming airs of superiority over their less-gifted fellows. But when you go a step higher and reach the man who can recognise this difference, who shall say he is unmusical? And even if he prefer the National Anthem to the “Cujus,” I cannot see that anyone can logically deny him some measure of musical taste. It may be a small measure, and as such may be commended to the managers of the Bristol Hotels. The man who likes *Maritana* or *The Bohemian Girl* feels that he is vastly superior, from the musical point of view, to the poor creature who likes the latest comic-song. But what an insignificant creature is he made to feel himself if he comes in contact with a lover of Gounod; whilst when the latter meets a full-fledged Wagnerite—but there, imagination recoils from the attempt to guess what the latter thinks of the former’s claim to the adjective “musical.”

If, therefore, this adjective be taken modestly to mean liking for opera more or less of the bad-ballad order, familiar oratorio, and well-known songs, and an appreciation of famous

performers regardless of what they play or sing, then Bristol must be considered as musical—as any city in the kingdom. But if a non-artificial appreciation of the higher and more developed forms of opera, of orchestral and of chamber music be deemed the qualification for the title—well, I may without danger commit myself to the assertion that, at any rate, it is still as musical as any city in the Kingdom. The Queen signalled a break in the musical quiescence of a generation by witnessing a performance of—*The Daughter of the Regiment*. And what is sauce for the—but my meaning is plain, I hope, without completing the adage. Of “music” and musical bands, and cliques, the city has ample, aye, even more than it deserves.

The favourable support afforded to the dreary dreadfulness of the *fin de siècle* ballad-concert in Bristol goes far to damn the pretensions its musical leaders whip up to the support of their city, in its claim for a premier position in the world of music. I have attended some of these concerts—the spirit of martyrdom is the guinea-stamp of the conscientious historian—and I found crowded houses, and enthusiastic appreciation of bad work, badly done. There was a decided preference among these musical enthusiasts for cacophony as distinguished from harmony, for mere show, as opposed to the artistically beautiful. And the house resounded with delighted plaudits in recognition of shockingly rendered specimens of the shoppiest of shop-ballads. In these affairs, art is not allowed to interfere with business.

In this connection it was also fated that I should hear oratorio, as it is oratorioed locally. A crammed Colston Hall kept me in countenance, and through the dusky dimness of its disgracefully gas-lighted space, I could see the magnificent numbers of its light-brigade choir of 600, for whose charge and attack I have nothing but praise. But the soloists! What can I say in extenuation of vocalists who compose while they vocalize, who have agonising disregard for the laws of *tempo*, who display blissful indifference to spasmodic changes of key, and who have not even the shadowiest pretensions to voice—of a public singing order? And yet I believe I formed only one of a minority of two in that vast audience who found not everything as it ought to be. Which may prove, I admit, that my musical ear is in sore need of education. Or it may prove something else.

There are two gentlemen in Bristol who, in themselves and by their zealous labours, almost justify—and go far to explain—the reputed musicality of Bristol. Both Mr. George Riseley and Mr. Dan Rootham are deserving of praise from without and support from within, and, above all, the place they hold in these pages, for the good work they have done and are doing in this promising field of sharps, flats, and naturals. Their two heads have but a single thought, though their two batons do not always beat as one.

The musical societies of Bristol are so numerous as to falsify by their mere tabulation many of the conclusions at which I arrived in the commencement of this report. But it is so satisfactory a list that, even if it cuts the ground for my comments from under my feet, I will reproduce it. There is another side to this ending—but that is another tale.

The Bristol Musical Association exists for the special purpose of purveying music, miscellaneous and sacred, to the masses.

The Bristol Musical Festival Society is drawn up on the lines of that of Birmingham. It gave its first Festival performance in 1873. Mr. Alfred Stone was appointed chorus-master, and Mr. (now Sir) Charles Hallé was chosen conductor. The performances extended over four days, and included *The Creation*, *Elijah*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Macfarren's *John the Baptist*, and *The Messiah*. The receipts amounted to £5,784, and the soloists included Messrs. Sims Reeves and Santley, and Mesdames Sherrington and Alvsleben. There had been previous Festival performances in Bristol, in 1803, 1814, and 1821, but this was the first of an organised attempt at regularity in the



COLSTON HALL.

provision of such musical events at intervals of three years. On this occasion, in spite of its enormous receipts, the small surplus was made up to £250 by the committee. On other occasions, the results have been even more unsatisfactory.

This fact—undisputed by even the most belligerent Roothamite—gives great justification to the policy of the Riseleyites, who hold—and hold with strong show of common-sense reasoning—that such indigestible results of the triennial great gorge are preventable. The main item of expenditure lies in the custom of importing Sir Charles Hallé and his merrie band, and as Mr. Riseley has trained an excellent local *corps d'orchestre*—that and other incidental items of expenditure could be saved the city, without an appreciable loss of musicianly excellence. Now, as the Festival takes away some £7,000

out of Bristol, some very staunch Conservatives are found on the side of "Riseley and Home Rule." There are other ardent reformers who put the pertinent—to some impertinent—query of "Why Festivalise?" and who maintain that this great triennial beat-up is the cause of local musical depreciation in the interim. And to these unpopular querists I desire to add my own personality.

Mr. George Riseley is also responsible for a series of Monday "Pops" during the winter months. There is a Madrigal Society, and the Orpheus Glee Society. There are quite a number of smaller musical combinations, and, I presume, a public who appreciate them.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON HOTELS.

I REGRET to animadvert in this report upon the wretched inadequateness of the Hotel accommodation in Bristol. No city in the three kingdoms is, I respectfully submit, so indifferently hotelled. Not only is the existing accommodation "for man and beast" fast becoming only worthy the attention of the latter animal, but it is absolutely inadequate to the needs of this great centre of business and tourist interest. There are too few hotels, and these do little to deserve or retain the custom that is compelled to go to them. For absolute highness in tariff and unutterable lowness in catering, Bristol hoteldom takes undisputed premier rank. It were easy to take one's ease at a Bristol hotel, if it were not for the rest. But the unanalysable compound of liquid impurity which is misnamed coffee, and the maddening persistency with which filleted plaice is made responsible for all the evils that other fish is heir to, render a prolonged visit to certain Bristol hotels I know of, a thing of dyspepsia and a doctor's acquaintance for ever. Of a surety, I and others had much to "put up" with when staying in Bristol.

The hotels are not worthy of the city, and improvement should not with the Bristolian begin at home, but at the hotels. Not only is the visitor absurdly limited as to choice in the city itself—for there are one or two good hotels in the out-of-the-way suburbs—but when that choice is made, wherever it may be, it will be a bad one. There is a coldness and cheerlessness about these places that chills, and one never loses the doleful sense of being naught but a "number." The only item in my bill at the hotel I stayed at last and longest, which I felt to be worth the price charged for it, was that of "attendance."

There is a fortune in hotel catering awaiting the enterprising folk who will make good to Bristol this part of its deficiencies. But they must be enterprising, and conduct their businesses much as they are profitably conducted in more up-to-date cities: in a word—as unlike as possible to the management of a present-day Bristol hotel.

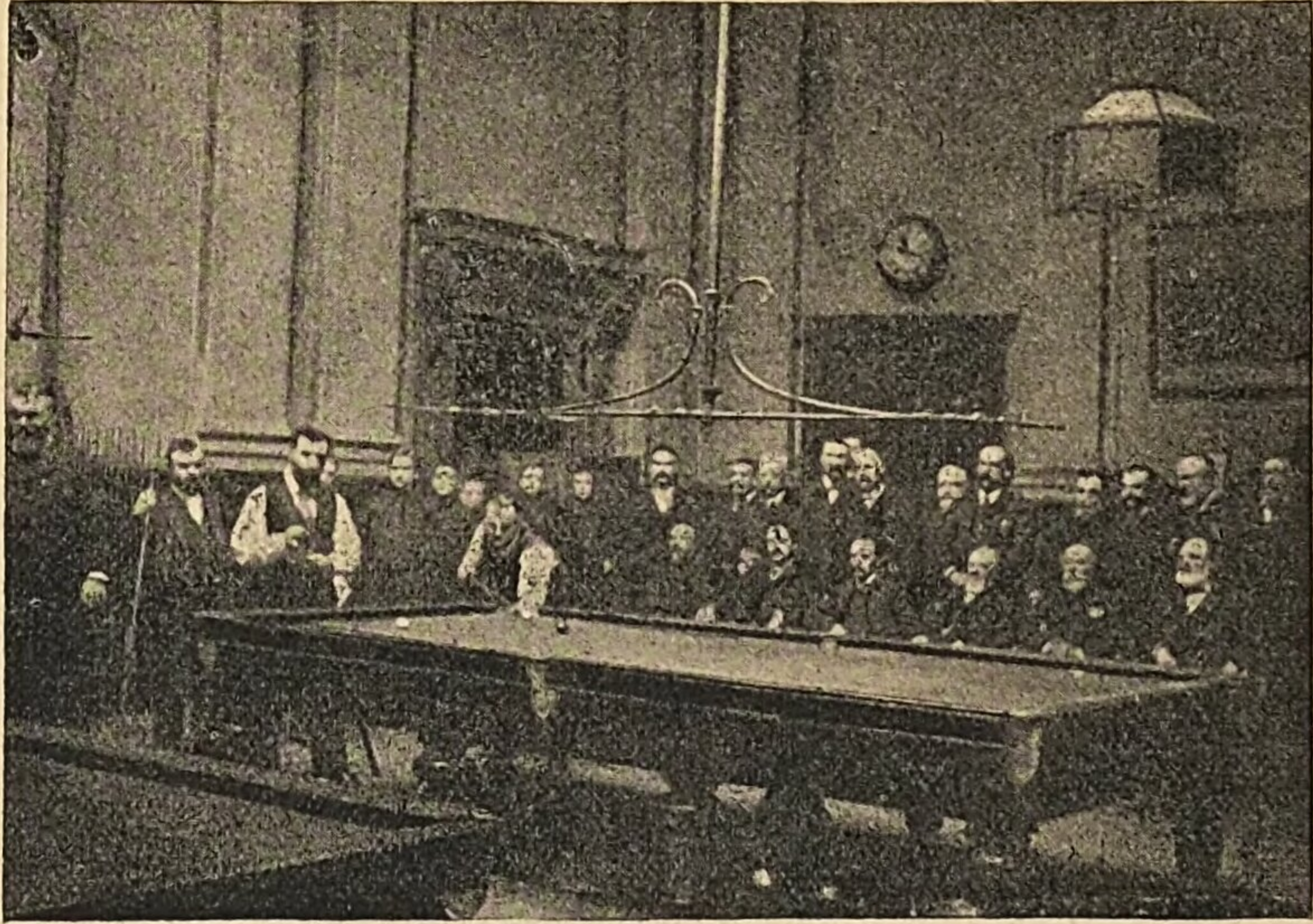
It would be hard to beat Bristol with its clubs. They are numerous; they are good. Pre-eminently, the best and the most popular is the "Liberal" in Corn Street. It has a handsome hall and a spacious and cosy billiard room, in which on one occasion I made the acquaintance of the two Liberal parliamentary representatives of the city and a large number of its most prominent citizens. It is *the* great mid-day meal *rendezvous* for commercial local lights.

I was unfortunate in making the acquaintance of only those Conservatives who found



SIR JOS. D. WESTON, M.P., AND CHARLES TOWNSEND, ESQ., M.P., IN THE HALL OF THE LIBERAL CLUB.

at their homes what they could not reasonably expect to get at a club, and in consequence did not get an opportunity of seeing what Conservative clubland was like. If its frequenters are in disposition, kindliness of manner, and other pleasant ways the prototypes



A MEETING AT THE LIBERAL CLUB.

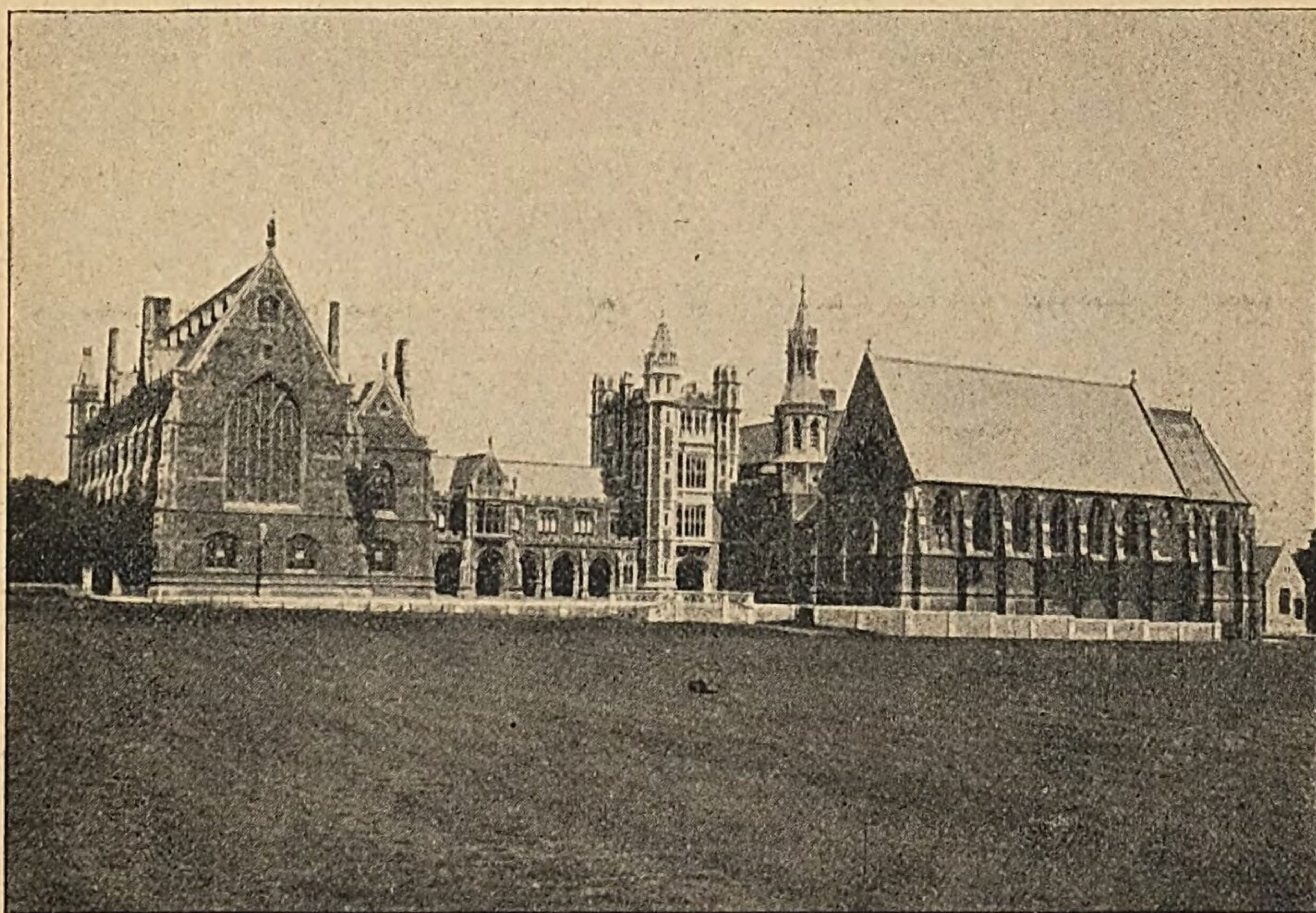
of those stay-at-home Conservative gentlemen, then I greatly regret not having got to know them. Their two principal clubs are the "Constitutional" and the "Salisbury."

All these, and several others, are political clubs. There is also one for gentlemen, and it is located in the Mall, Clifton, where and whereabouts its members would naturally reside.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON SCHOOLS.

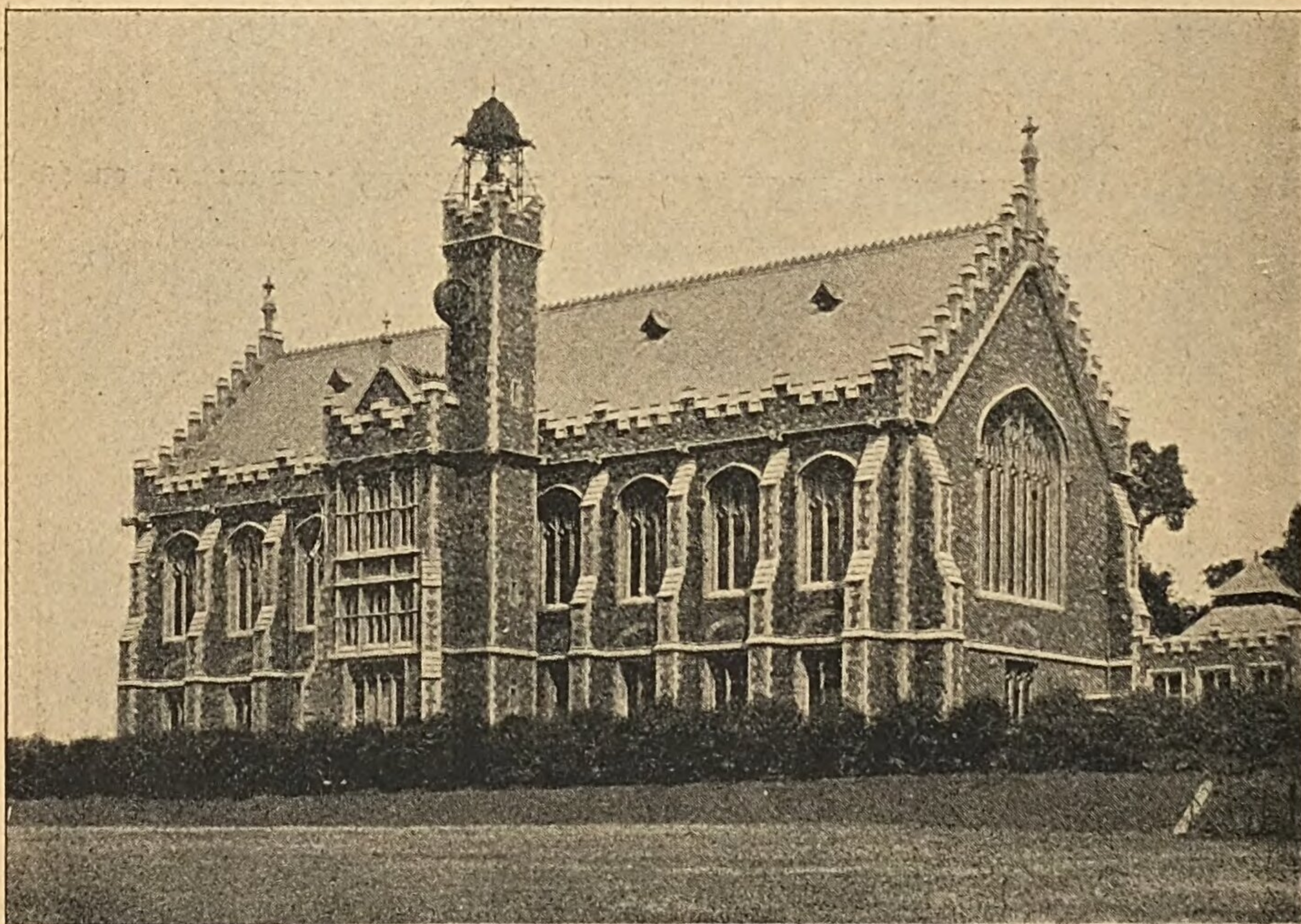
BRISTOL is to be congratulated upon its splendid educational institutions, including the endowed schools, which are among the richest in the country. There are several of these latter, *The City School, or Queen Elizabeth's Hospital*, founded and endowed by John Carr, in 1586; *Colston Boarding School, or Hospital*, founded and endowed



CLIFTON COLLEGE.

by Edward Colston, in 1708; *Colston School*, also founded by Edward Colston in 1710; *Elbridge's Charity Schools*, built by John Elbridge in 1738; *Redcliff Blue Girls' School*, built in 1720, and supported for some time by voluntary contributions; *Redcliff Endowed Boys' School*, founded in 1856; *The Red Maid's School*, founded by Alderman Whitson in 1627, whose picturesquely clad denizens literally paint the town red and lend much colour to the dull surroundings; and *Stoke's Croft Endowed School*, founded in 1722, by Abraham Hooke.

The handsome pile of buildings on the site formerly occupied by the old Bristol Grammar School, at the corner of Unity Street and Denmark Street, is a unique institution. It is the outcome of the old Trades School, and is under the parental care and guidance of that ancient local wealthy guild, known as the Society of Merchant Venturers. The school provides an education in the applied sciences, and passes a boy, at the age of nine years, through the elementary courses. The higher education consists of a thorough grounding in either commercial or scientific subjects, so that the scholars are well fitted for their predestined connection with manufacturing or the constructive arts. The buildings, I was informed, were most elaborately fitted internally. So I went to view them. But the



THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

head-master sent me word to the effect that he was too busy to attend to me. The schools cost about £40,000 to build.

The most important Educational Establishment in the West of England is *Bristol University College*. It was established in 1876, and for upwards of ten years was supported by voluntary subscriptions. During this period it had more than 5,000 students. Some very distinguished men have been connected with it, including Professor Marshall, Professor Ramsay, and Professor Silvanus Thompson. The buildings are among the handsomest the city affords—or cannot afford, as the case may be—and now include a pretty Medical School, elaborately fitted, only recently added and opened. The late Government was strongly urged to make a direct grant from the National Exchequer to the College. The justice of this is apparent, when it is remembered that the three Welsh Colleges—

Cardiff, Aberystwith, and Bangor—have each a direct grant of £4,000 a year. Bristol University College has many more students than any of the Welsh Colleges, and only asks for the same measure of financial recognition of its public value. What will the present Government do for it? That may depend upon the Bristolians themselves. But the College is a great educational success, and the right to deny it the monetary privileges of the smaller Welsh Colleges should be very hard to maintain. The present Principal (it is of interest to know) is Professor C. Lloyd Morgan.

There is quite a business as well as an alliterative sound about *The Clifton College Company, Limited*. The company was formed in 1860, and the College and grounds occupy a site of fifteen acres. About £100,000 have been expended on this College, which is really a big public-school open to all (male) comers. The rules at one time restricted



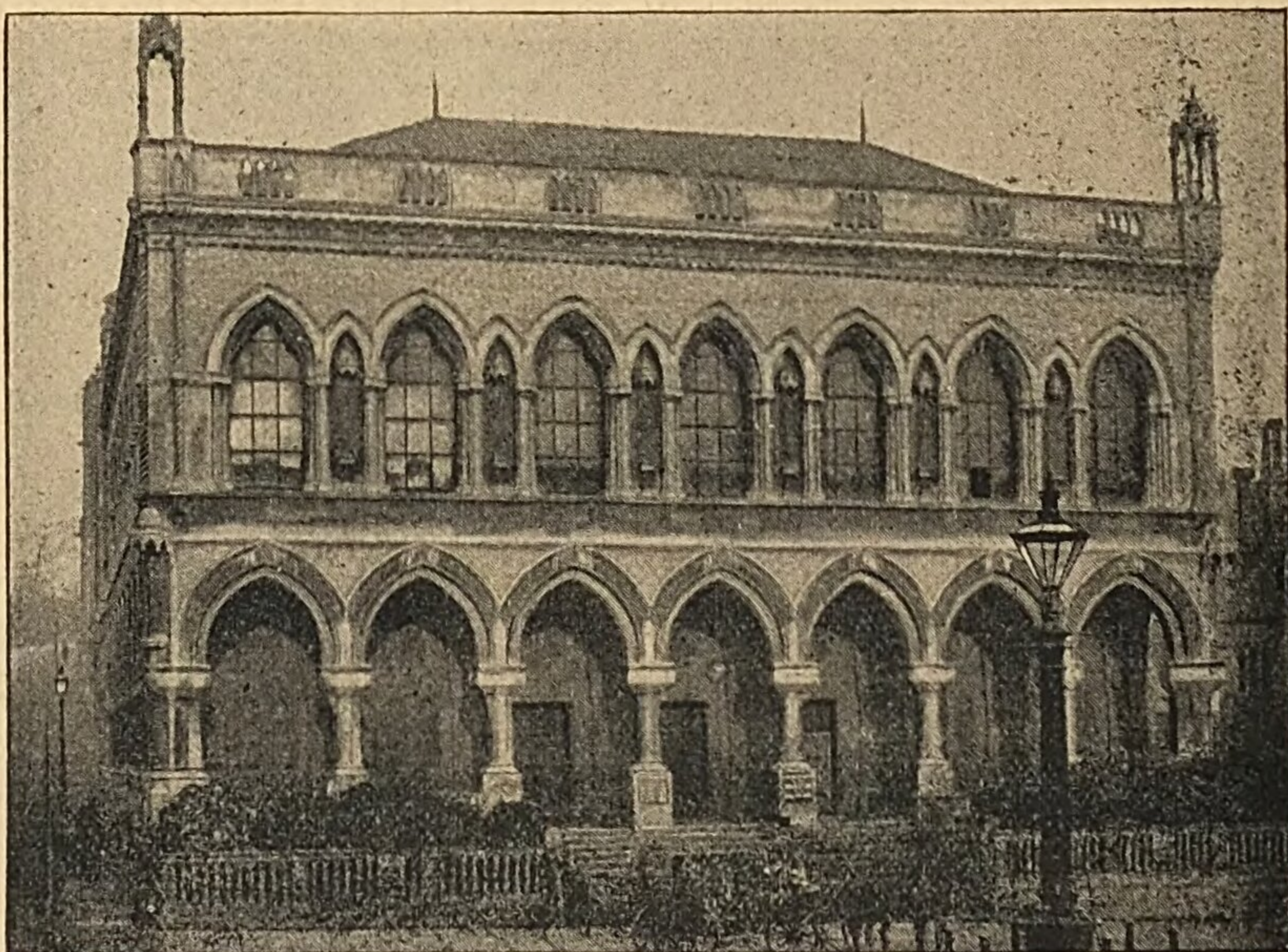
TEACHING THE YOUNG IDEA, AT THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

its use to the “sons of gentlemen.” But as the “genus” was in danger of becoming extinct, the scope of the unwritten law was enlarged, and “boys” now form its source of supply. The buildings are handsome, and the grounds are above reproach. Its educational position is high, as the material from which it manufactures its “examined” is of the best, and its staff talented. The Rev. M. G. Glazebrook, M.A., is its head-master. Both this College and the University College represent the “higher education” of Bristol.

The Grammar School is the next most important establishment devoted to the teaching of the young idea. It is the oldest and the most important of the public schools, and is supposed to have been established about the beginning of the thirteenth century. The present handsome building in Tyndall’s Park, in which the school is now contained, was commenced in 1877 and finished in 1879, when it was opened by the late Right Hon. W. E. Forster, M.P. The school accommodates 400 scholars. The head-master is Mr. R. L. Leighton, M.A.

There is a School of Science and Art, and the list of denominational and other schools is a lengthy one. And then there are the Temples erected to Board School worship and its ways, without which no British abode of man is perfect. Surely no other city in England has such a formidable array of educating mills! Is Bristol educated beyond improvement? Such an hypothesis might explain much.

Bristol is not well librated. The provisions of the Free Libraries' Act were adopted for the city as far back as 1874, but judging by results, the workings have not been of a vigorous or enterprising character. The different branches of the Free Library in no case contain an adequate number of volumes: they are unusually badly newspapered, and with one most recent exception, they have uncomfortable and ill-arranged quarters. There is



MUSEUM AND LIBRARY.

room for considerable improvement in this direction. The Library in King Street is the oldest free library in the kingdom, and looks its age. The authorities should be brought to book for not keeping this archæologically interesting old building in better repair.

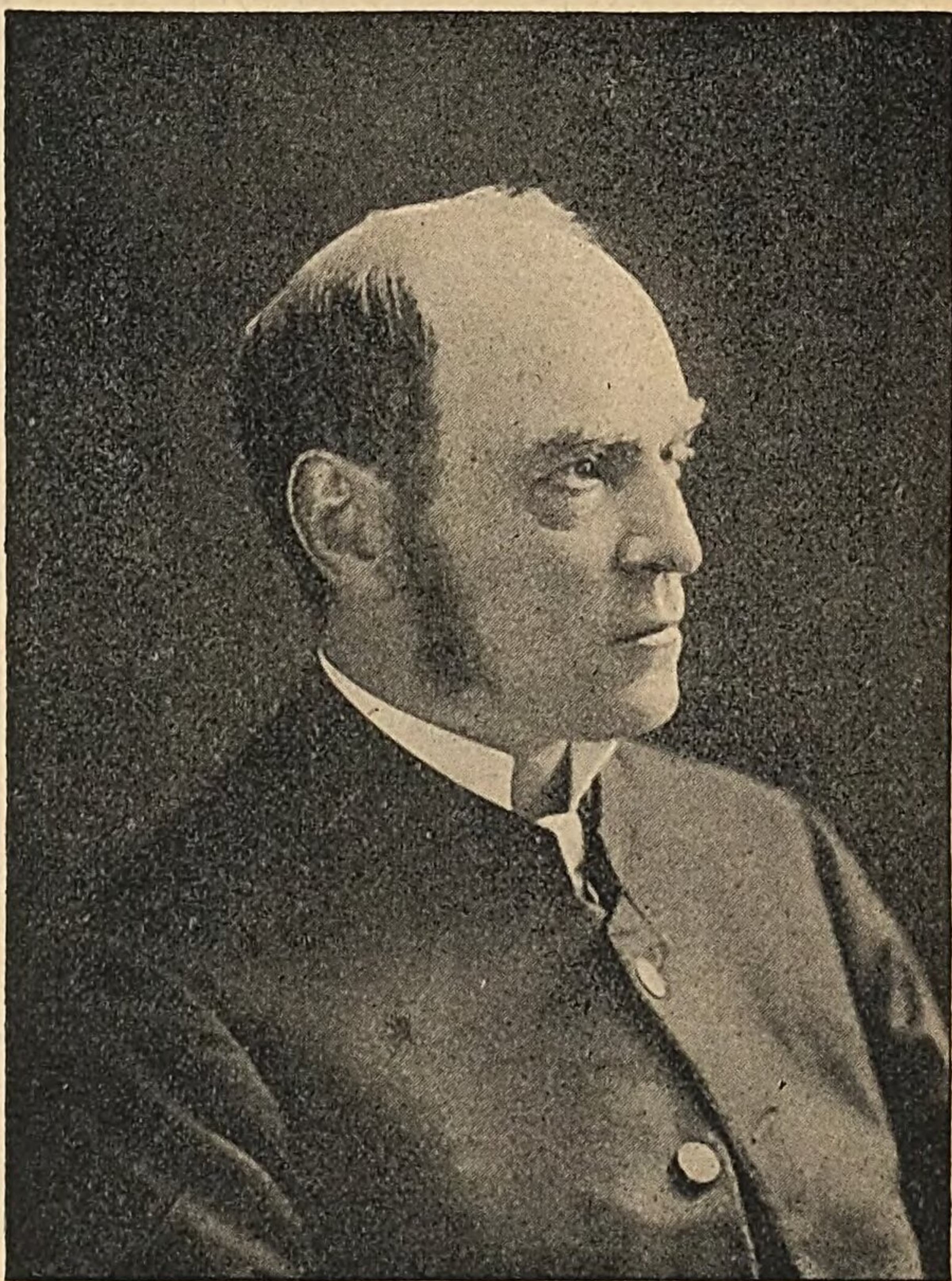
The most complete and the most commendable Library in the city is that attached to the museum in the handsome building in Queen's Road. It has ever been a subscription library, and its rich stores of well-selected books have only been accessible to the fortunate few. This state of things will soon be only a matter of history, as the generosity of the late Sir Charles Wathen has given the institution to the city, and, I presume, affiliated it with the other Free Libraries. This is a matter for congratulation. But still, I cannot help thinking that Bristolians, as represented by their Libraries, are not great readers. They show up but poorly in this respect when comparisons are instituted with cities such as Birmingham or Bradford. And such comparisons speak volumes.

CHAPTER XV.

ON CHURCHES.

WHAT other city can aspire to Bristol's assortment of churches, either numerically or architecturally? Not one. They are literally peppered the city over, and neither custom nor age can lessen the infinite variety of their steeples. In their different high and mighty forms they are the landmarks of every street, and the silent proclamation of every parish. As viewed from a balloon, or other convenient overhead standpoint, Bristol is not unlike an Alpine range, its churches taking the place of the mountain peaks. The Bristolian is deservedly proud of his places of worship, if only because they testify so silently and so stonily to his godliness. A religious census of Bristol has demonstrated some remarkable facts, much to the advantage of the Bristolian as a church-going biped.

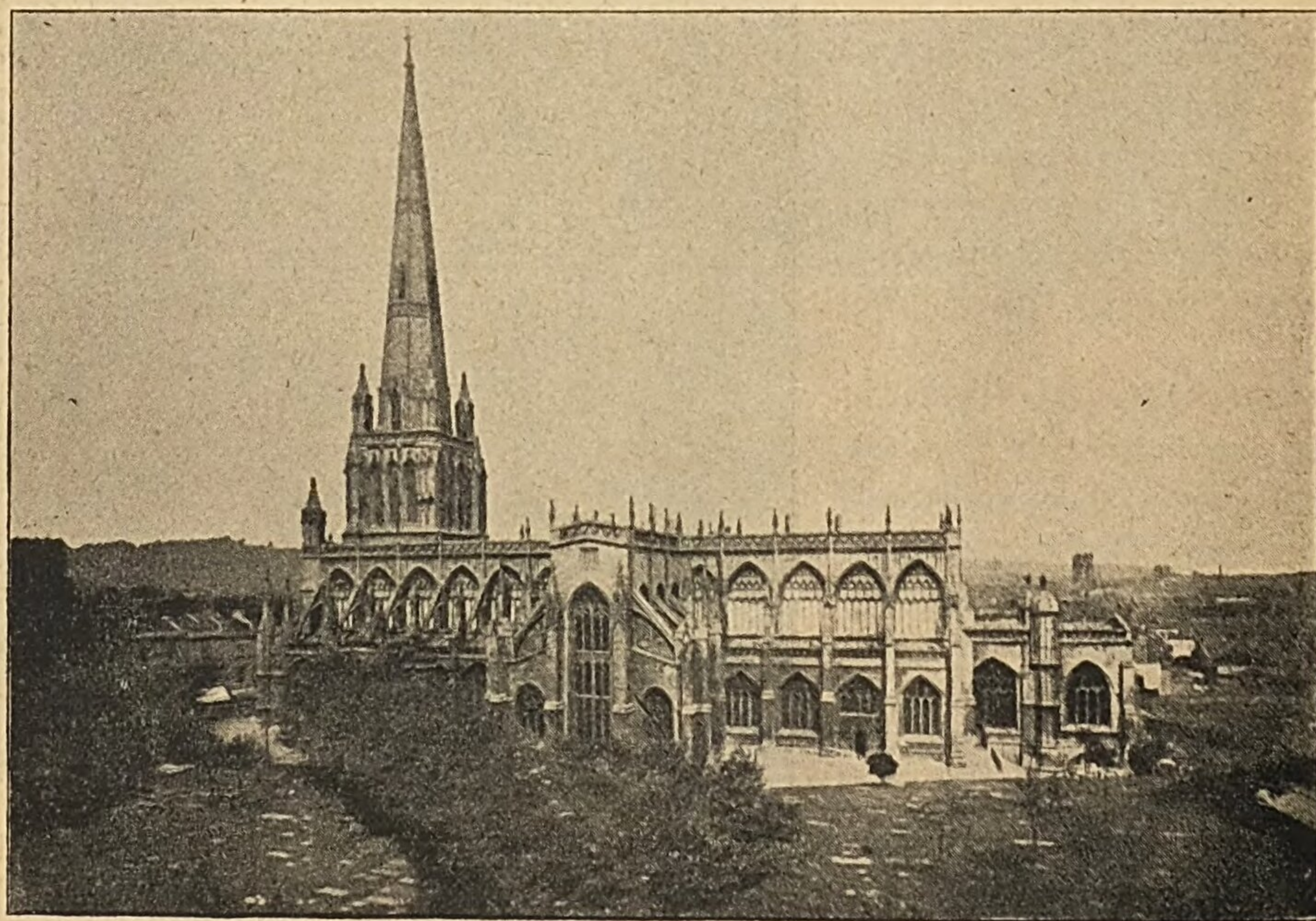
Bristol, like other Christian cities, has its "hundred sects," but has them prominently and permanently. Nothing has gone ahead in Bristol so much as the number of its churches and chapels. The Bristolian is religious, but fortunately, fails to be sanctimonious. There is amazingly little of the spirit of intolerance abroad in Bristol. This is one of the healthiest signs of its vigorous social life, and is of great hope for the future, when Bristol shall take its proper place among the cities.



THE VERY REV. DR. PIGOU.

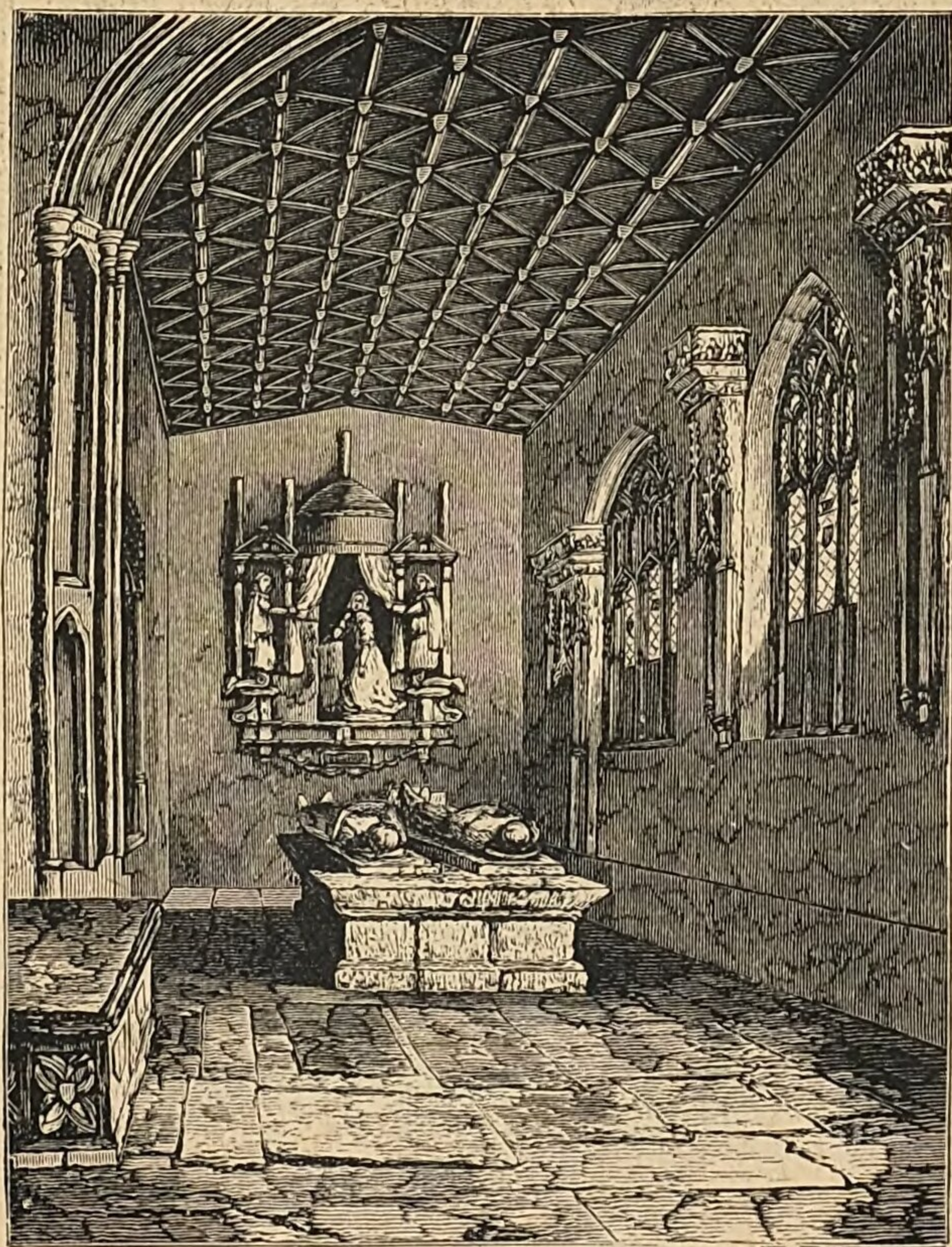


TEMPLE CHURCH.



REDCLIFF CHURCH.

Bristol Cathedral, the noblest ecclesiastical structure in the City, was founded in 1142 by Robert Fitzhardinge. Its interior has a broader-than-it-is-high appearance, and is formed by a central and two side aisles. It has magnificent stained-glass windows, and many monuments. Dr. Charles John Ellicott, its Bishop, I claim for notice elsewhere, and Dr. Pigou is its Dean. This gentleman is the most popular churchman in Bristol, where he arrived in November, 1891, and gives evidence of welcome staying powers. The Very Rev. Doctor was made in Germany, is sixty-one years of age, and an orator of the most approved pulpit order.



AISLE OF ST. MARK'S CHURCH.

The Church of St. Mary, Redcliff, is the finest parish Church in England. It is a rich architectural feature of the city, and was founded about the thirteenth century. It will always be associated with the name of Chatterton, who loved it well, and sang its praises none too wisely.

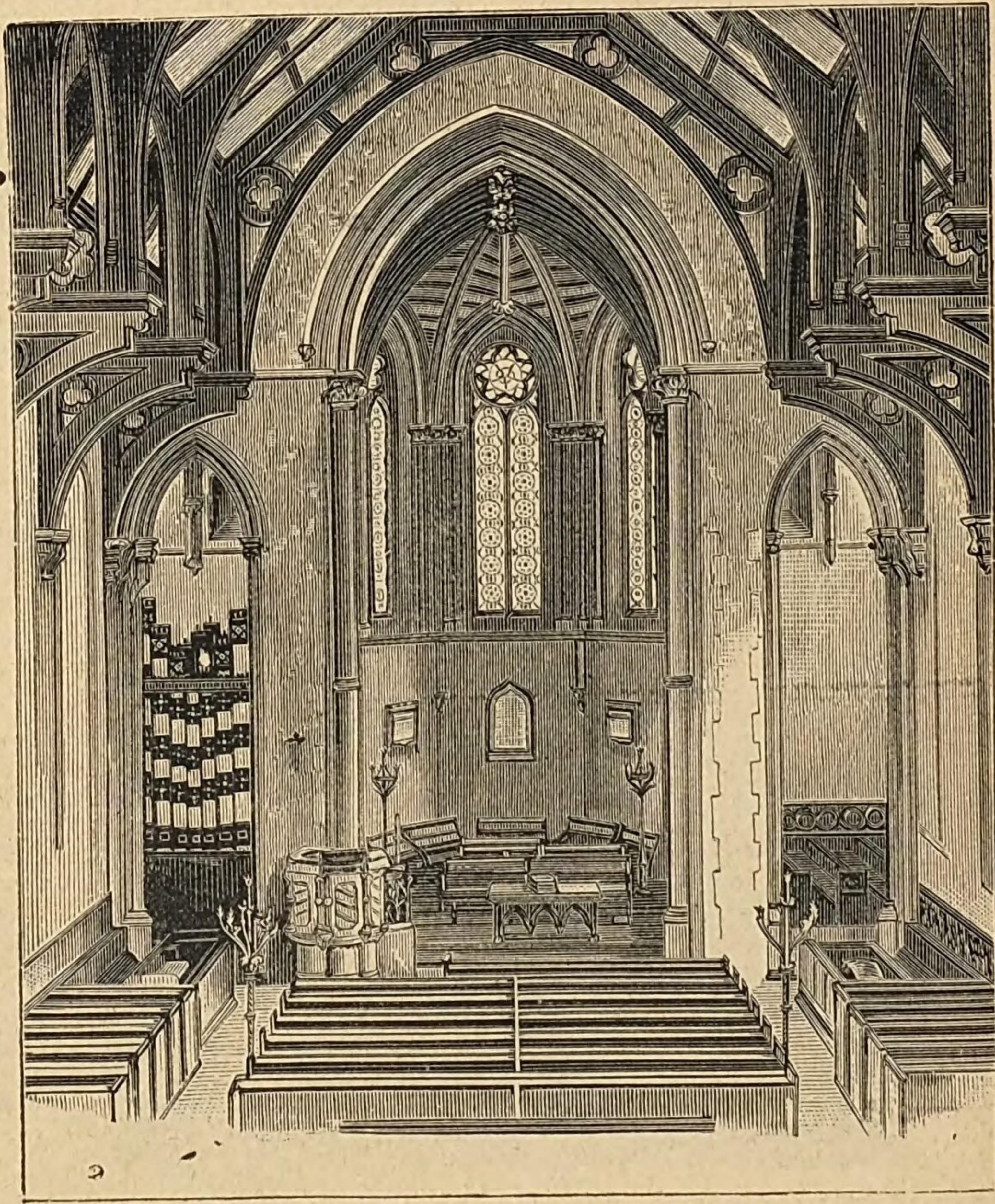
All Saints' Church, Clifton, is among the handsomest of Bristol churches. It cost £40,000, and was consecrated in 1868. Its vicar is the Rev. Bodley Bromley, M.A.

An interesting old chapel is that of St. Mark's (The Mayor's Chapel). The interior is impressive, with richly emblazoned roof and oak fittings.

St. Nicholas Church, High Street, was built upon the site of an older church, which was founded about 1030. It forms an interesting landmark on the busiest spot in Bristol.

Clifton Down Congregational Church was opened on the 13th November, 1868.

All Saints' Church, Corn Street, is an antiquated structure, dating from somewhere about the year 1466. It contains the monument to the memory of Edward Colston.



INTERIOR OF CLIFTON DOWN CHURCH.

Originally known as the Church of Al-Hallowen, this remarkably picturesque old edifice has had a chequered history. There are some interesting chronicles handed down from the fifteenth century regarding the regulations of the church in those dim days, some items of which I reproduce for the satisfaction of the curious:—

“CONSTITUTIONS AND ORDINANCES.

“(Temp. Edward IV.)

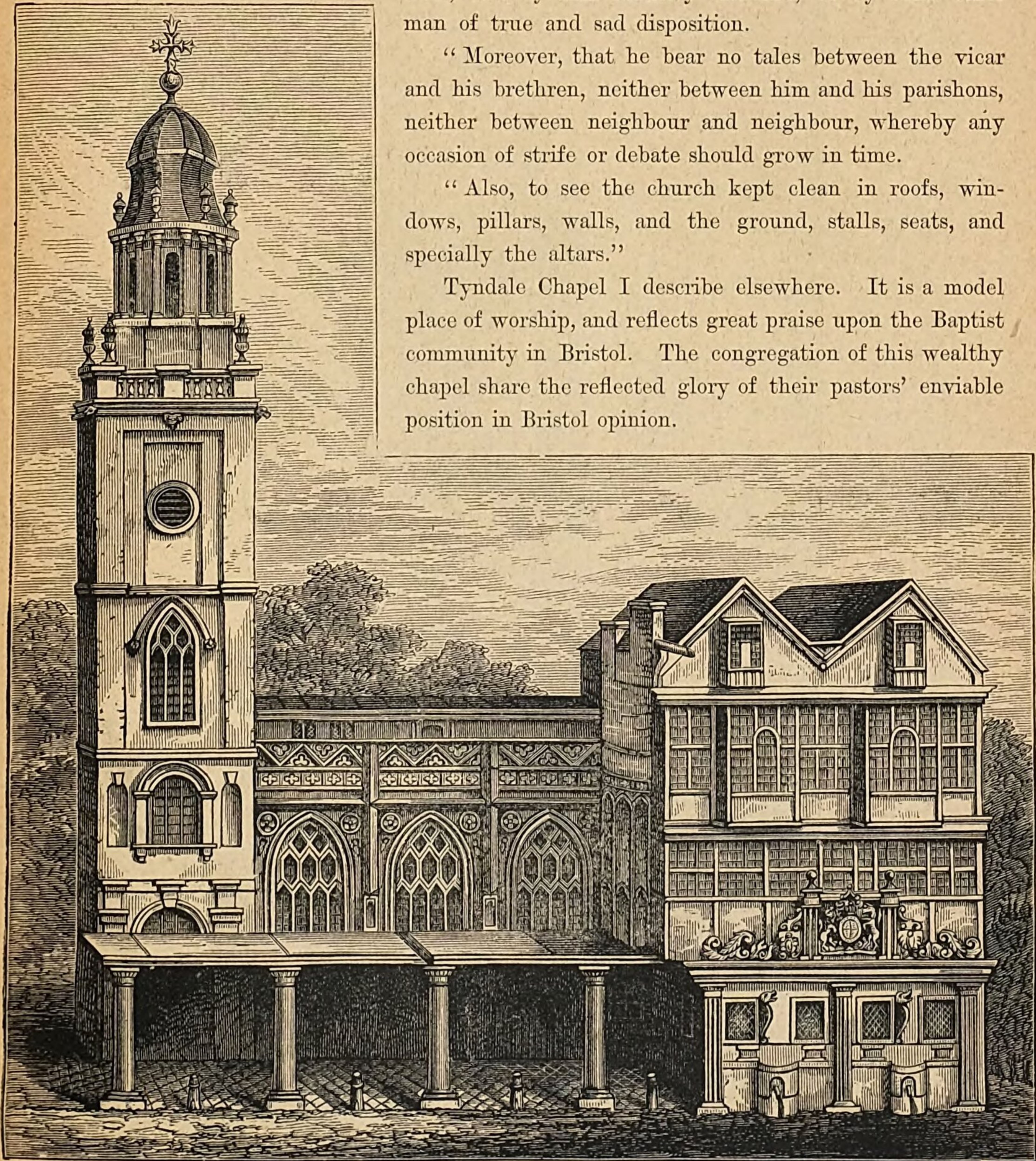
“Item, that none of the parish from henceforward lend out no manner book out of the church to no manner of use under the pain of *xiiid. tocus quotiens*.”

“In primis, he (the clerk) to be true and profitable unto the church unto his power, as in keeping and guarding the vestments, and books, jewels, and all other ornaments longing to the said church, and to see that the church doors be opened and shut in due time, and by him securely searched, or by some other man of true and sad disposition.

“Moreover, that he bear no tales between the vicar and his brethren, neither between him and his parishons, neither between neighbour and neighbour, whereby any occasion of strife or debate should grow in time.

“Also, to see the church kept clean in roofs, windows, pillars, walls, and the ground, stalls, seats, and specially the altars.”

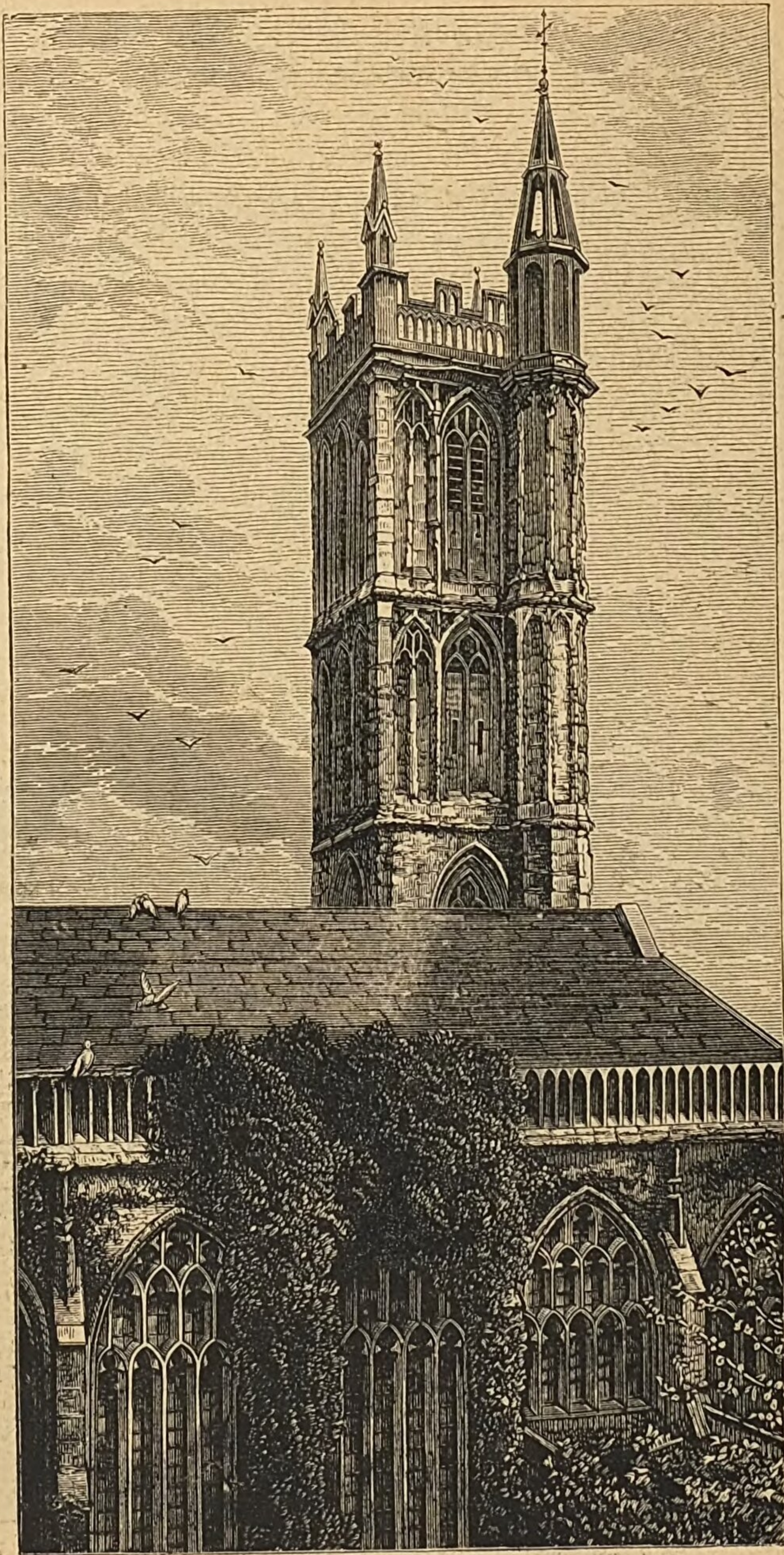
Tyndale Chapel I describe elsewhere. It is a model place of worship, and reflects great praise upon the Baptist community in Bristol. The congregation of this wealthy chapel share the reflected glory of their pastors' enviable position in Bristol opinion.



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, CORN STREET.

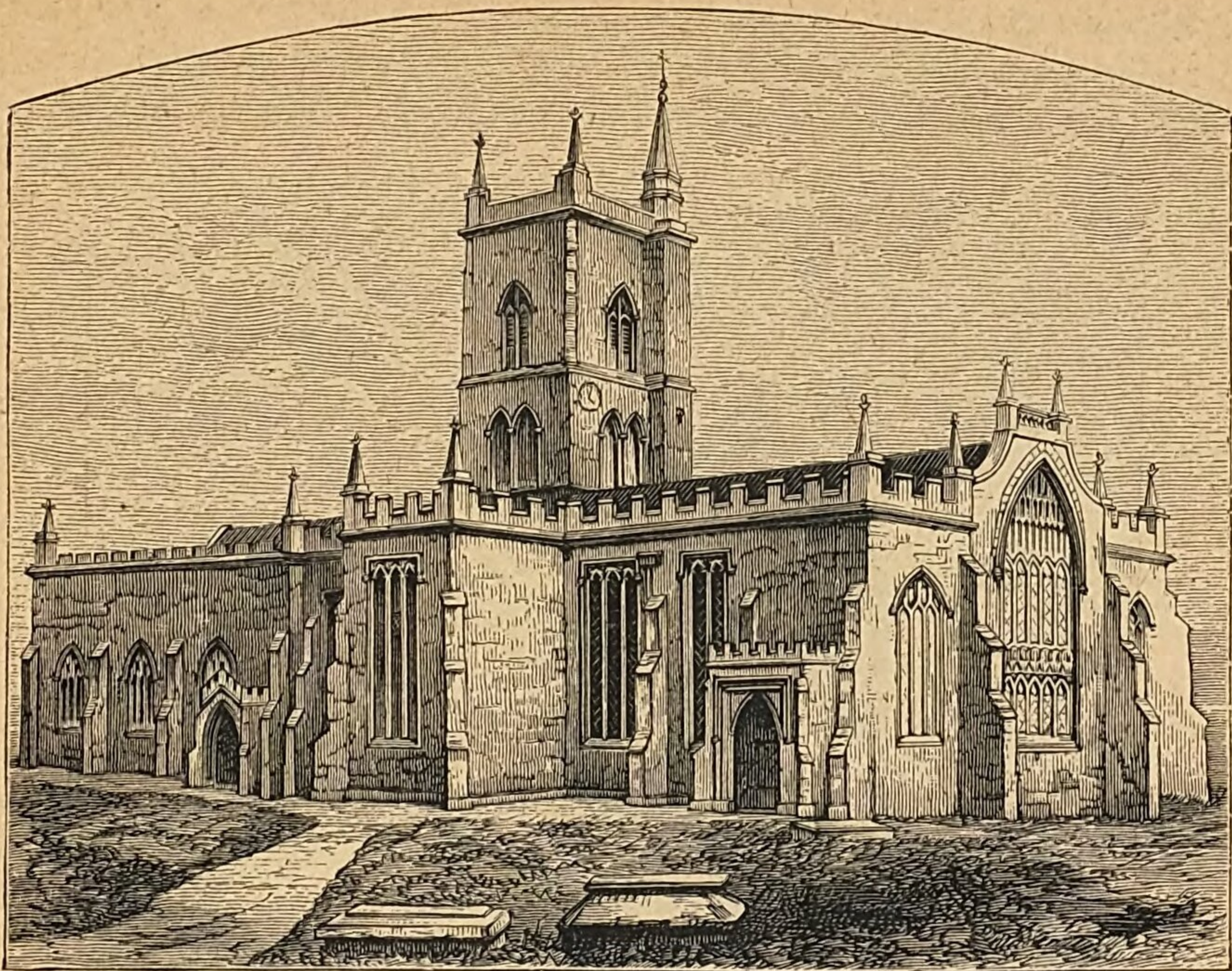
St. Werburgh's Church, Baptist Mills, is remarkable for its tower, which is some 200 years younger than the rest of the structure, and dates from 1385.

St. Phillip's Church was once a Benedictine Chapel. It was probably built in the 12th century.



ST. WERBURGH'S CHURCH.

The Church of St. John the Baptist is in Bedminster, and is a modern structure erected on the site of one of the earliest of Christian houses of worship, which was pulled down in 1853. It is distinctly handsome in design.



ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH.



CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

St. Michael's Church was founded in 1755. Its architecture is of a nondescript character; the grave-yard is well-filled, and boasts some curious epitaphs.

Temple Church, erected by the fraternity of the Knights Templars in 1145, provides



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH.

Bristol with its leaning tower. The parapet of this piece of ornamentation varies from a strictly perpendicular course heavenwards, to the extent of overhanging the base by about four feet.

There are over 200 Houses of Worship in Bristol. These do not include the Council or Mansion Houses.



INTERIOR OF TYNDALE CHAPEL.



CHAPTER XVI.

ON RAILWAYS.

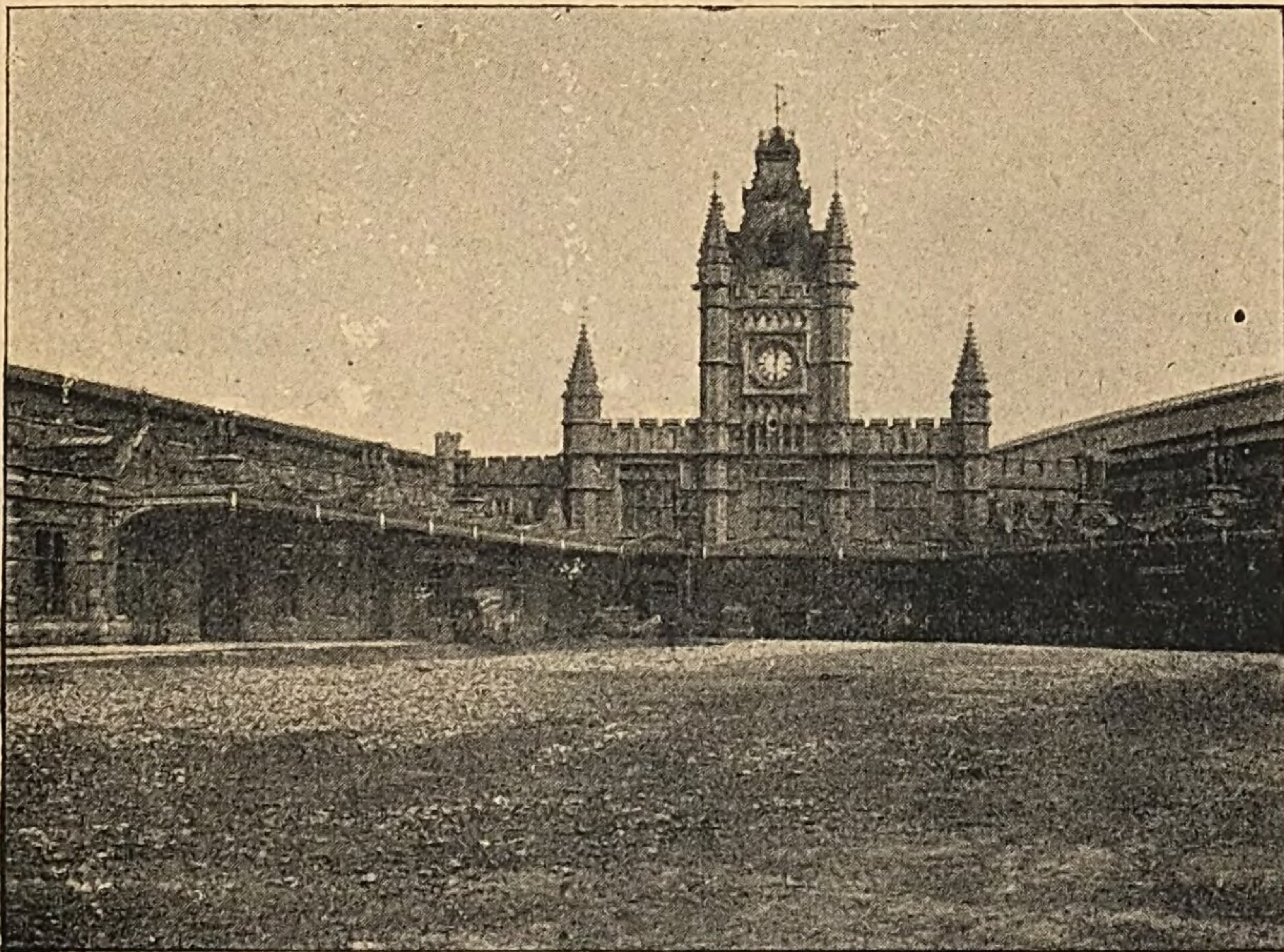
BRISTOL is railway-served, in and out, by two great companies, The Midland and The Great Western. The former provides a direct communication with the North; the latter with London and all West of Bristol. It is evident that Bristol will be handicapped in its trading facilities, until it gets a competitive route to the Metropolis. Monopoly is seldom a good thing; with Railways—never.

The Great Western Railway Company owes its inception to the enterprise of a few Bristol citizens, which no doubt accounts for the exceptional advantages and special attention ever afforded to Bristol and its wants by the Paddington management. However this not-to-be-taken-too-seriously supposition may be, in January 1833, the project of a line of railway to London was mooted, and enthusiastically supported. This great undertaking was proceeded with, the line was constructed, and opened on the 30th of January, 1841. For many years the *Great Western* directorate distinguished themselves by the accommodation they vouchsafed to their third-class passengers, and by the multiplicity of trains which they placed at the disposal of this humble description of traveller. The first “parliamentary” train on the *Great Western* started on the 1st November, 1844, and journeyed from Bristol to London in the extraordinary time of nine and a half hours. With a strange disregard of the fitness of things, it is recorded that the language of the passengers by this train was not also “parliamentary.” Actuated by that sweet don’t-care-a-damnateness which characterises the policy of our most aristocratic railway company, the directors constructed that and auxiliary lines upon the already universally denounced “broad-gauge.” For the last few years the G.W.R. has been industriously occupied in taking up this gauge, and relaying their system upon other lines. But an unfortunate railway boycott was for a long time placed upon the West of England, due to the impracticability of direct connection with the systems of other Railway Companies.

When the Bristol and Gloucester Railway was opened in 1844, the crass senselessness of the Great Western Company’s position on this question was more accurately gauged. Though the construction of this route practically completed the chain of communication between Bristol and the North of England, yet, owing to the difference of gauge, every train was stopped at Gloucester, as if that delectable city formed the end of all earthly railroad progress. The Midland Company, who ran to Gloucester, found this condition

of things unbearable, and after railing at them unsuccessfully, and in spite of prolonged but ineffectual opposition from the Great Western Board, eventually succeeded in connecting Bristol by narrow gauge with the rest of the railways of the country. The first narrow-gauge rolling-stock to enter Bristol arrived on the 22nd of May, 1854.

The Railway escutcheon of Bristol has its one untarnished spot in the iron-handed but friendly grasp of the Midland, that pioneer of all our Railways on the lines of enlightened policy and similarity of interests as between Railway Company and Railway served. The high favour in which the Midland Company is held in Bristol is not so much due to the benefits it has conferred on the city and its trade—it might have done much more under these heads than it has—but to the change for the better its example worked upon the local policy of the rival Company. In tapping Bristol, it is not a misplaced metaphor to say



JOINT RAILWAY STATION.

that the Midland delivered the city and its trade from the blighting clutches of the great local railroad octopus. Unfortunately for the absolute completeness of this simile, the Midland have not as yet joined Bristol with St. Pancras—that is, for practical, as opposed to “goods,” purposes.

The joint Railway Station at Temple Meads is the property of the two Companies, and is a handsome, fairly convenient structure of Brobdingnagian proportions. It was finished in 1864, and cost the joint companies £300,000. From this station the whole of the through traffic with Bristol and the rest of the kingdom is worked. In time, a sufficiency of railway servants for the work may be arranged for. The line to Clifton Down and Avonmouth Docks, the most important connecting link Bristol has—as the future will demonstrate—is the joint property of the two Companies. This also has its terminus at Temple Meads. The co-operative principle has its disadvantages as applied to Railways,

as etiquette, if nothing else, would prevent one Company's trains excelling those run by the other.

Or are the Bristolians themselves responsible for the long-drawn-out leisureliness which characterises the movements of these not too particular trains? There are plenty of people who use these suburban conveyancing conveniences. But there are people in Bristol, I regret to record, who would do anything—or anybody. That gem of the first suburban water—Clifton, is only a matter of three railroad miles from the big Bristol Central Railway Depôt; but oh! the getting there! I tried it, myself—once. I have



GEORGE HENRY TURNER,
GENERAL MANAGER, MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY.

never had time to forget it—since. On, slowly on, meandered the train, first stopping here, then there, then everywhere else. And great spaces of time are lost in oblivion, ere the passenger is brought to the place he has booked to—if old age has not killed him *en route*—an object lesson in the optimistic conviction of our nineteenth-century progress.

It is just possible that this bit of travelling is done with a purpose, to show up by sheer contrast how forward the companies responsible can be when they desire to be fast. But all the same, I desire to call the attention of Mr. George Henry Turner, General Manager of the Midland Railway Company—a gentleman of the highest railway station, who has won the blue-ribbon of the Locomotive race, the Derby of the railroad world—to the only thing about that

system in connection with Bristol, that I, in company with Bristolians, find wanting.

In 1869 the Midland went to Bath—by means of a branch from Mangotsfield, a station on their main line to Gloucester. So, ever since, Bristolians have enjoyed the advantage of a choice of routes whenever they have been consigned to that city of medicinal springs and homœopathic winters.

What Bristol needs most in the way of Railways is a connection between its Docks and the Main Lines. It seems almost incredible that there should not be railways round the

Bristol quays. But incredible or not, it is a Bristolian fact. The Corporation, who own the Docks, have always opposed any such modern common-sense item of completeness; if there were railways round the Docks—which, it is true, are only serving part of their purpose minus these new-fangled means of communication—it would mean that lines of rail would have to traverse the quays and adjoining connecting streets. And just look how these might injure the wheels of aldermanic broughams! Against such an argument as this, come weal, come woe, Bristol Docks have ever been powerless and rail-less.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON STATUES—AND OTHER THINGS.

I AM anxious to pay tribute to a noble and somewhat unusual quality possessed equally by those famous Bristolians who are now residents of a new and improved Bristol. These illustrious dead have all the merits post-mortem modesty can command in an advertising world. With extraordinary unanimity they appear to have insisted that no public monument of their great works should keep their memory green—in Bristol. And the explanation Bristol thoroughfares demand in providing ornamentation in the stony figures of four non-local celebrities only, is hereby obtained, and at everybody's service.

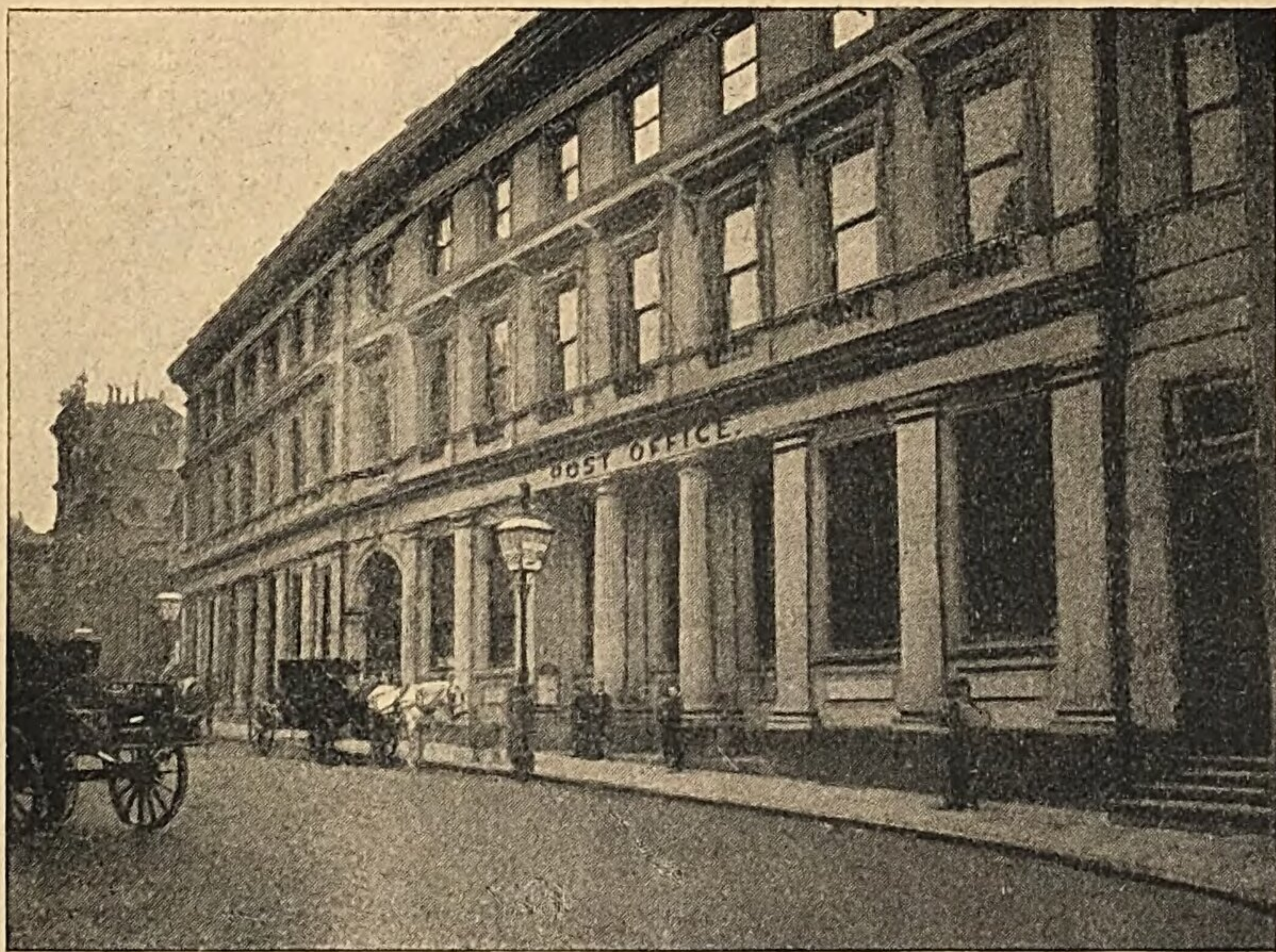
These four monuments represent with statuesque incorrectness William III., Samuel Morley, the Queen, and Neptune. I have entered into the biographical details associated with these personages, and I have found that the first-named was no Bristolian, the second was a native of Nottingham, the third has only a passing-through connection with the city, while the fourth—it must be admitted, has certainly as much to do with Bristol as any other place. But the Thornes (who founded the Grammar School), John Carr (Founder of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital), Alderman Whitson (Founder of the Red Maid's School), Edward Colston, the great philanthropist, Sebastian Cabot (who discovered America—for Christopher Columbus), Southey, who suffered from poetry, Chatterton, who died from it, have no public statues to associate them and their works with their *alma mater*. But as I have hinted, this is not a flagrant lapse of public spirit on the part of such appreciative and quick-to-act folk as the Bristolians. The true reason is what I have explained it to be.

Talking of great men, and apart from its glorious vista of aldermen, past and present, it is a curious fact that the Poet Laureate, the King's Painter, the King's Physician, the King's Musician, the Postmaster-General, one of the best sculptors in England, and the champion pugilist of England—all claimed nativity with Bristol at one and the same time. These were Robert Southey, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Dr. Henry Southey, Charles Wesley, Sir Francis Freeling, Mr. Baily, and Pierce the "Game Chicken."

The list of public edifices is not an edifying one. Bristol has no Municipal Buildings, but it has fostered for ages a "*vendetta* of the sites"—and in Bristol, a fruitless disagreement upon the place where much-wanted Municipal offices should stand, is the next best thing to having them. The gaol-like structure at the corner of Broad Street was built in 1824, and is dubbed the Council House. It is ridiculously inadequate, and would disgrace a

ramshackle Irish village's pretensions to civic importance. The only occasion upon which the aldermen of Bristol can feel out of place amid their surroundings must be when they most do congregate with the ordinary Town Councillors of the city, in the wretched little dilapidated Council Chamber this building manages to afford. In its several rooms there are a quantity of interesting oil-paintings, possessed of rival claims for notice on the scores of ugliness and age.

The Guildhall is a little further down Broad Street. It is an improvement, as a building, upon the Council House. I regret to have to damn it with such faint praise. It took the place of an older erection in 1846, and a local poet—neither Chatterton nor Southey as



THE POST OFFICE.

far as I can ascertain—expressed his own and public opinion upon the structure at the time in this wise—

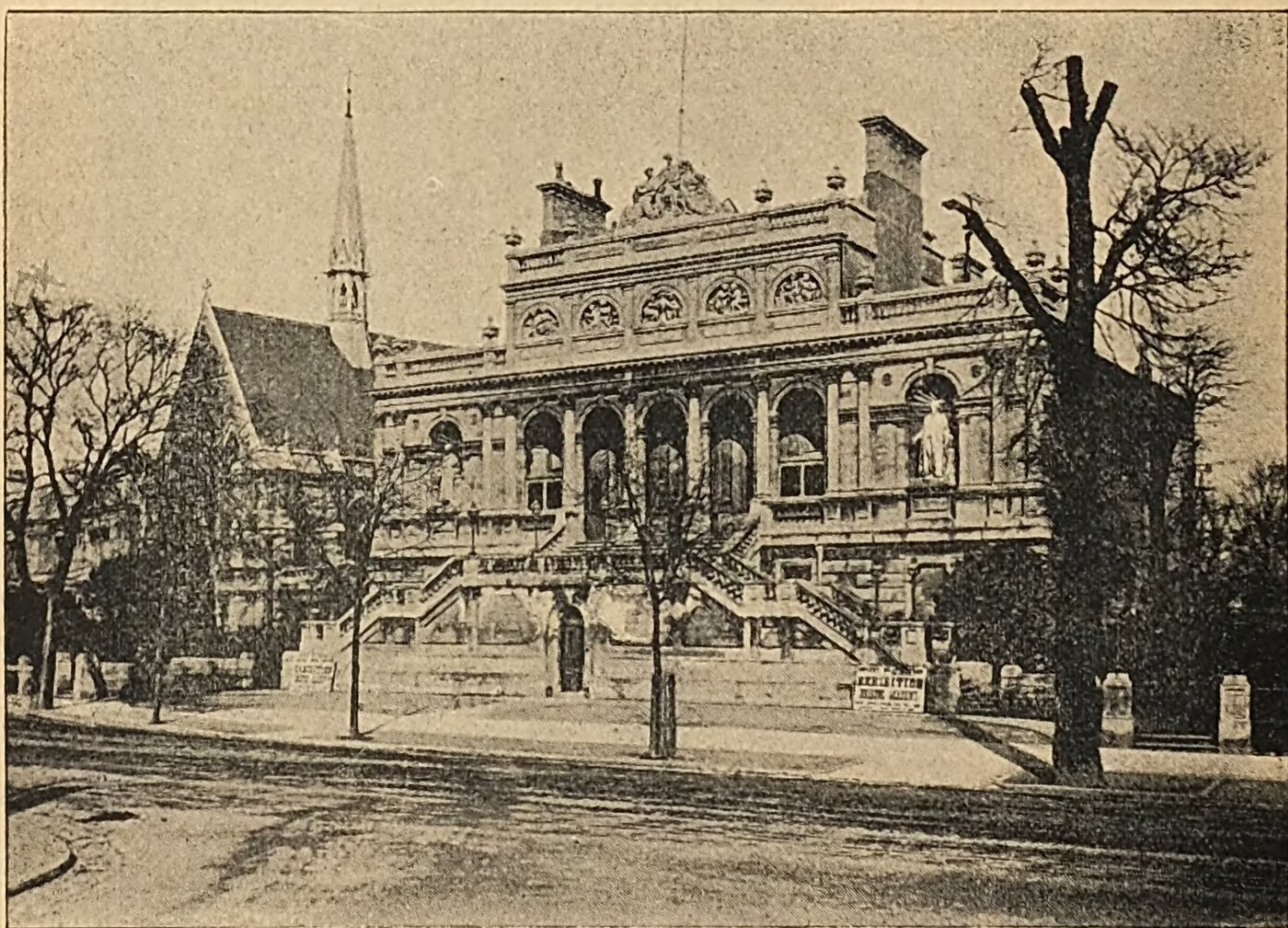
“They pull’d down the old hall, because it was too small,
And now they’ve built a new Guildhall, with no hall at all.”

Continuing this chorus of approval, I may mention that Mr. Justice Coleridge delivered himself of a judgment to the effect, that the place “was the perfection of inconvenience.”

The General Post Office is in Small Street, and gives the offices of the *Times and Mirror* an advertisement. It is by far the most commendable public building Bristol has, being handsome in appearance, and well fitted internally. Now that Bristol is once again *en évidence*, its willing hands will find plenty of work to do. In the past, ample time was at their disposal for indulgence in such healthy recreations as the guessing of missing words.

Two notable buildings, already referred to, are the Museum and Library, and the

Fine Arts Academy in Whiteladies Road. The art-lessness of the Bristolian is demonstrated in the career of the latter institution. The present building owes its existence to private bounty, in the energy and Will of Mrs. Sharples, who, living and dead, testified her conviction of the necessity of some such institution. It was opened in April, 1858. Though it contained a good collection of pictures, the public could not be drawn there, and the rooms were generally empty of flesh and blood illustrations of the human form divine. In 1882 it was stated by those in authority, that the donations towards the only public collection of "art" the district possessed, had not averaged £4 annually for the previous thirty years. But if I proceed much further in this analytical direction, it will be assumed that I am endeavouring to establish a plea of lack of



FINE ARTS ACADEMY.

artistic temperament in the nature of the Bristolian; and I hesitate to be associated with such an untenable insinuation.

The city can be heartily congratulated upon its parks and open spaces. They are numerous, well distributed, well arranged, and well appreciated. These, an excellent system of sewerage, and its incomparable suburbs, provide Bristol with its most favourable death-rate, lower than that of any other city of the same size. I might add, that theoretical people live long.

Good swimming baths are wanted. One I visited entailed fearful climbing on a dreadfully hot day. The cool, refreshing, prospective dip shed forth its more than candle-light to inspire me in my up-hill task. But I returned unbath'd. I looked

within the bath's crowded noisy interior, at the complexion of the water and its amphibian contents, read the unwritten lines over the gateway :—

Abandon soap all ye who enter here,

and retraced my steps, a sadder and unsatisfied man. There are two Turkish Baths, both good.

The Banks represent the wealth of the city quite as much as its unevenness. They add much to what architectural excellence Bristol can lay claim to. There is a splendid harvest of these in Corn Street—when they are not the offices of Insurance Companies. Many are local; others have their head offices in London, and their principal reserve in Bristol.

I have seen and spoken to, and respectfully admired, the representative citizens of this happily-found city. They display themselves and their thoughts, through the photographer's art and my pen, in the pages that follow. This brings me to an explanation.

Bristol is represented in the British House of Commons by four gentlemen, in spite of the photographic evidence to the contrary in the "Biographies." The missing M.P. is Colonel Sir E. S. Hill, K.C.B.; a Conservative and a local worthy. I discovered that the gallant Colonel was in Egypt when he was not in a more inaccessible place, the while I wanted him. He has two local addresses, and several relatives and friends. My applications to the latter through the intermediary of the former have been bereft of either results or courteous attention. I am therefore unable to show what Colonel Hill looks like, writes like, or thinks about. His absenteeism has its only compensation in the satisfaction of the Liberal whip, who has been heard to give musical utterance to the lines commencing :—

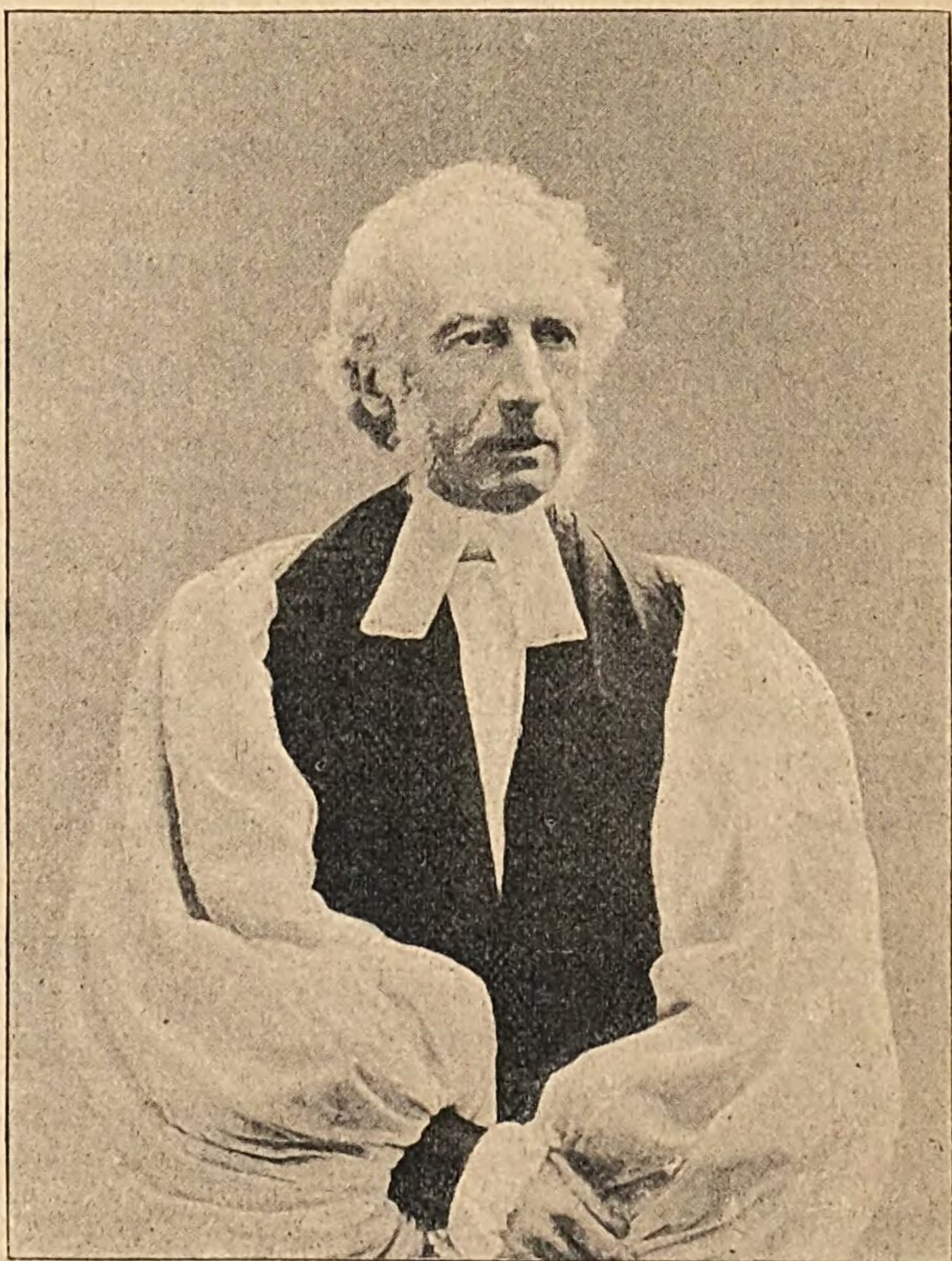
"There is a green Hill, far away."

PART III.
BIOGRAPHIES.

BISHOP ELLICOTT.

HALF of Bishop Ellicott belongs to Bristol. In the spiritual sense. The other half of him is Gloucester's. Which half is not stated. But doubtless not the better-half. For the Bishop rests most in Gloucester. So his head, possibly, admits the greater claim. Of the larger corporate-body. I have elsewhere demonstrated. That these half-measures did not always avail. Bristol had once the sole vested and apron'd interest. In a whole Bishop. But its glory has since departed. And taken half of its allowance of churchly autocracy with it. There is a palace at Gloucester. There is no palace in Bristol. There was—once. But it was destroyed in the 1831 riots. And another one arranged for. When an economical predecessor of Bishop Ellicott's concluded. That two palaces were unnecessary. There are some strangely constituted folk who think that conclusion. Applies to them all. But they are not bishops. And the only way to change their opinion. Is to make them bishops.

Bishop Ellicott first saw light in 1819. In the physical sense. And in the rectory of Whitwell. Rutlandshire. After a preliminary canter through the schools, he was sent to Cambridge. Where he showed what good metal he was made of. By taking



Yours faithfully
C. J. Ellicott

the Bell Scholarship. A circumstance which has the true ring about it. In due course, he graduated. And in 1844 was elected to be a very good Fellow—of his college. Was even then an indefatigable worker. Could never get enough labour into one day. To satisfy his hunger for work. So went to Norway. Where the days are six months long. And where there is only one night per annum. And some mountains to climb. For the bishop's motto is "Excelsior." And he pedestrinates aye to higher things. So he must go where there are mountains to climb. For he cannot make them to order. Not even out of mole-hills. Which tendency may explain his semi-association with Bristol. And its streets.

Bishop Ellicott does not appear to have appreciated the penny "lotteryture." Of the day. For he was nearly smashed in a railway accident. In which six persons were killed. Ordinary persons. And many injured. The bishop—then only a professor—was among the latter. And with real heroism. Administered spiritual consolation to the other injured. The doctors tried brandy. And many lives were saved. Professor Ellicott recovered. And continued his University lectures. The next great accident of his life was his appointment to the Deanery of Exeter. By Lord Palmerston. In 1863, he was consecrated Bishop of Gloucester. And Bristol. Which was made memorable through one circumstance. A bad pun. Perpetrated by the Very Rev. Gilbert Elliot. Who was made Dean of Bristol. And complimented upon his own appointment. When he sorrowfully remarked that there was no "c" to his name. Do you "see"?

Bishop Ellicott is a man of wide reading. His own critical and devotional works constitute quite a library. He has no taste for fiction. And has done more than any other living man to revise the New Testament. Which revolutionary event was mainly due to two things. The incorrectness of the original version. And the publication in 1870 of a volume from the bishop. Dealing so exhaustively with the subject. And so convincingly. That it was largely instrumental in convincing the unconvinced. Of its need. He was the Chairman of the New Testament Company. (Revised Version.) And the independence and the tolerance of his chairmanship. Are best gathered from the quotation appended. Which is annexed from a speech of the bishop to the revisers:—"Do your work together; consider experience your truest guide; don't try to 'improve' our present Version, but be satisfied with correcting it; use the old words, and have an ear for the old rhythm; don't decide till afterthought has exercised its due influence; make the text better than the margin; and, lastly, follow the spirit of the old rules."

A literary physiologist divided the sexes. Into men, women—and bishops. But he of "Gloucester and Bristol" is as much of the first as the last of these classifications. He is so kindly a gentleman, that a complete knowledge of his ways. Is necessary to understand with what firmness he can rule. When occasion demands. He has great learning, and its attendant quality. Modesty. As a conversationalist, he is absolutely brilliant. And tolerant of all opinions. Even his own. He has joined the movement to restore the Bristol Bishopric. And divide the "sees." And divert the ever-swelling stream of diocesan duties. To their proper channels. One of them—Bristol Channel. And has generously offered part of his income. Towards carrying out this object. A large sum has been subscribed. A residence—fit for a bishop—has been already

provided. An Act has been obtained. But the curtain is not yet ready to rise. Upon the new Bishop of Bristol. To many not unwise ones. It appears better to put up with—or without—half a bishop you know of. Than fly to the benedictions of a whole bishop you know not of. For Bishop Ellicott is beloved by many. Esteemed by all. Because he so frequently forgets that he is a bishop. But never that he is a man.

W. R. BARKER, Esq., J.P.

TO be a Mayor is to scale the heights of municipal glory. In the ancient city of Bristol it is worse than that. For by virtue of its hoary irresponsibility. And by ancient charters innumerable. This office boasts powers—nominally, and titles—also nominally. That lift its holder far above the tinsel bumbledom. Of the common herd of Mayors. Mr. W. R. Barker is the present Chief Magistrate. And fortunately no humourist. And has comported himself on those occasions when it has been my good fortune to view him. With the necessary gravity and pseudo-seriousness. Without which no Mayor is genuine. Mr. Barker is what is called locally, a Liberal. And is not, what is called locally, “well up.” So he has broken by his Mayoralty the records of centuries. Which have gone far to demonstrate the license allowed themselves. By what are practically, though not electorally. The Civic rulers of Bristol. I will explain.

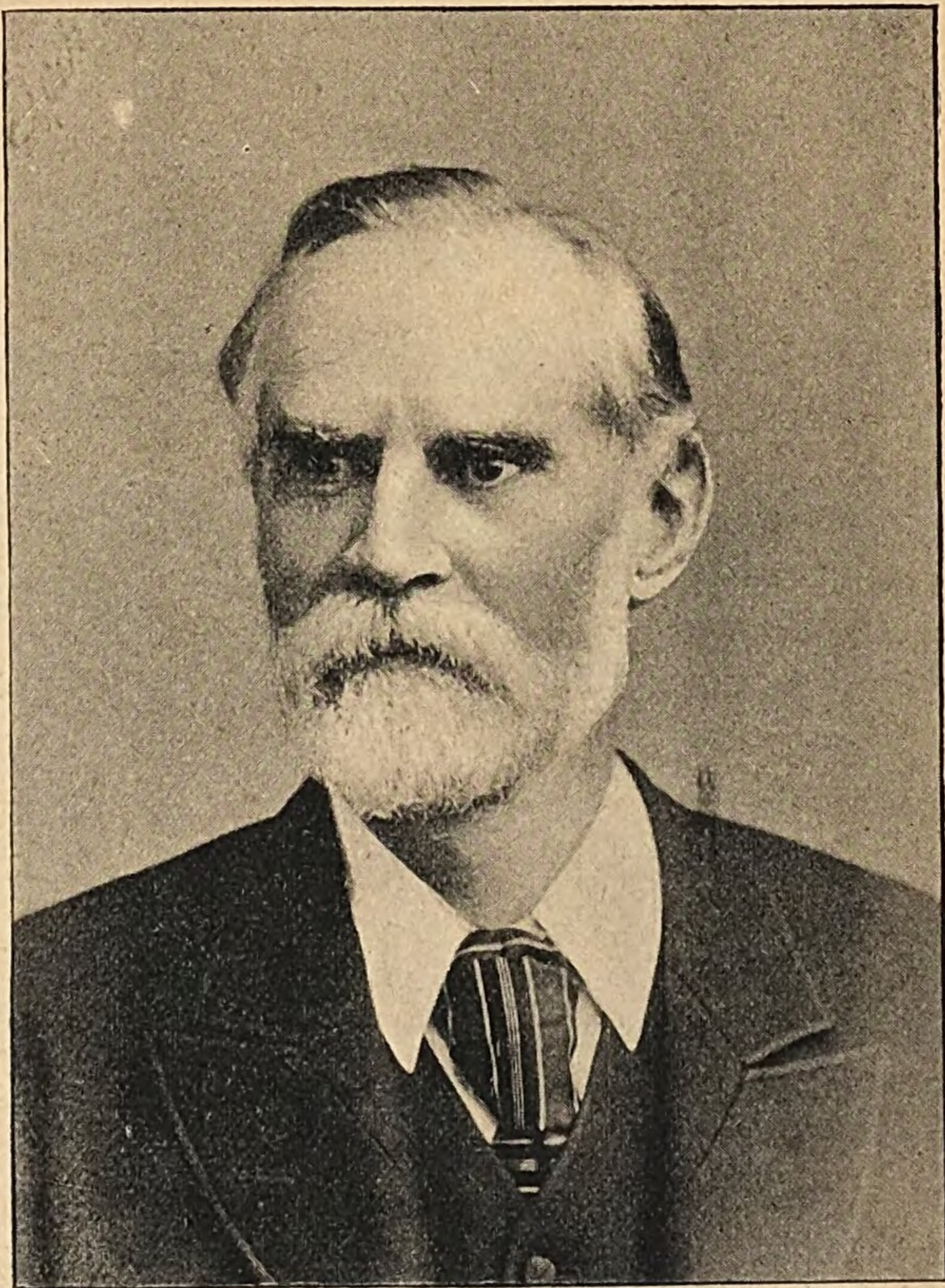
Bristol aldermen are elected by—themselves. Represent—themselves. Act—for themselves. And protect—their own interests. They are all members of the same political party. The designation of which. Neither wild horses nor any number of Bristol Mayors. Shall drag from me. For years and years, these portly civilians. Have allowed a limited number of their irresponsible body. To provide the Mayor for the coming year. And the *raison d'être* of the Warwick Committee is by these presents, established. For the last fifty years the Bristol Mayoralty. Has been confined to a favoured few. The same people held the same office with damnable reiteration. Until within quite recent times. The process of exhaustion has compelled them to wander. Without the pale of their close corporation. And the result is. W. R. Barker, Esq., J.P.

Of Mr. Barker's origin local report knows little. And cares less. Was born in London. But the manifold duties of his new position. Did not enable him to provide me with any personal details. Or I should have been able to have stated when. His connection with Bristol is a long one. And he was first admitted to the Town Council. In 1882. Where he did much good work. Of a not too energetic nature. He is well known locally as an archæologist. And is a prominent member of the Antiquarian Society. So his new municipal companions may be expected to furnish him. With the material necessary for the adequate compilation. Of a fresh treatise on fossil remains. His tastes are undeniably literary. And he has himself written—with the scissors. A well cut-out volume upon something or other. Which was handsomely bound. And

widely presented. And compensated the reader for the littleness of interest. By an immensity of title. As—*par exemple*. “An account of St. Mark’s, or the Mayor’s Chapel, Bristol, formerly called the Church of the Ghaunts.”

The Mayor of Bristol is styled the Right Worshipful. And as Her Majesty’s representative. Takes precedence of every one in the city. He has an allowance of £700 a year. And a gilded coach. And lives—when he can afford it. In the Mansion House. Which is Down Clifton way. Mayors of Bristol have in the main been chosen for their bank-books. And have made the Mansion House the medium for ostentatious display. And an indiscriminately prodigal hospitality. It is greatly to the credit of Mr. Barker. That he has changed all this. And is bent upon demonstrating. That pandering to low tastes and high living. Is not a necessary qualification for the chief magistracy.

The Mayor of Bristol is of good height and address. But strikes a medium in all things. The subject of “spirits” among others. He is reputed to be a scholarly linguist. Has a fondness for oysters. And speaks French like a native. Not necessarily of France. His hair is tinged with grey. And his voice with huskiness. He thinks well of everybody. Including the Mayor of Bristol. And has a talented line of descendants, male. He wears glasses in private. And a gold chain round his neck in public.



Yours truly
W R Barker

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, BART., M.P.

A STATESMAN. And the Parliamentary representative for Bristol West. Is the Right Honourable Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, Bart., P.C., M.P., B.A., M.A.



Yours faithfully

M. E. Hicks Beach

D.C.L. Who has the distinction of being a successful man. And who suffers from Conservatism. He is the eldest son of the eighth possessor of the title. And lives at Netheravon, Wilts. The Beach family is an ancient one. And numerous as sand on the sea-shore. Though none were ever stranded. The present baronet was born young. In the year 1837. And unlike most Bristolians. Chose London for the occasion. His education was commenced at Eton. Continued at Oxford. And completed in Dublin. As Secretary for Ireland. He had a brilliant University career. And would have made a capital man of letters. As his full name and titles testify. He became possessed of the first two in the alphabet in 1858. And M.A. In 1861. He has succeeded to some big estates. In the counties of Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. Which is not his fault. But his fortune. And as his con-

nection with the sister country is political and not inimical. Is no absentee landlord. And is a Home-Ruler — agriculturally speaking. And is popular to a—

university—degree. He labours hard on agricultural questions. Though not a typical agricultural labourer. But if he were, would be. He has a refreshing bluntness of speech. And calls a spade, a spade. And not a farm implement. He is fond of field sports. And is often first in having a brush—with the hounds. The chase has no dangers for him. Nor have many other things. And he has been twice married.

Sir Michael has the strongest claim upon contemporary notice. Through his long Parliamentary associations. He first entered the House in 1864. As member for East Gloucestershire. When his undoubted abilities did not escape the observation. Of that great judge of his fellow-men. The late Lord Beaconsfield. Who had not then scaled the *dizzy* heights of his magnificent ambition. But when he formed his first Government in 1868. Made Sir Michael an Under-Secretary of State. In 1874 he was offered up as a sacrifice. Upon the altar of the Irish Secretaryship. Where he failed to call forth sufficient objection to his appointment. To warrant his destruction. Or immortality. He was made a Cabinet Minister in 1877. And then a Privy Councillor. In 1878 he relinquished the Secretaryship of Ireland. And was promoted down to that for the Colonies. And showed the sterling stuff he was made of. By not only differing from his colleagues upon the Eastern Question. But by resigning his post. He distinguished himself in Opposition from 1880 to 1885. When he became Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons. In Lord Salisbury's first Administration. He was then for the first time Member for West Bristol. And is fain to remain so for the rest of his Parliamentary days—and nights. He again courted the dangers of his old love in 1886. But soon resigned the Irish Secretaryship. Not because his political insight was weakened. But because his physical eyesight was. Then a spell of travelling and rest combined. Fortunately restored him. To his former health, and colleagues. And he re-entered the Cabinet in 1888. As President of the Board of Trade. And did much good work. Especially in carrying a Bill for Regulating Railway Rates. And in successfully opposing the Channel Tunnel scheme. Thus showing he was up to every move of the Board. And the great bore-d.

Tall, slim, broad-minded, and bearded, Sir Michael is pleasing to look upon. Though not oratorically great. There is nothing little in what he says. Has much practical sound sense. And a know-what-I'm-talking-about faculty. Is endowed with great natural abilities. Tempered by cultured study. And the sphere of his work is far more useful than brilliant. He has not gone up like a rocket. But is never expected to descend like a stick.

SIR JOSEPH DODGE WESTON, M.P.

THERE is no more loyal Bristolian than Sir Joseph Weston. Nor more unreasonable. Upon matters affecting the honour and glory. Of the city of which he is the most distinguished representative. In a non-parliamentary sense. A generous, genial gentleman is Sir Joseph. With a successful career behind him. A man to respect for his many unselfish qualities. To emulate—if one only could—in the elements that have made for his success. Which has been prodigious. And, to his honour be it said. Most aptly described on occasion by himself. At a political meeting. When, becoming eloquent in spite of himself. He brought down the house and raised the roof. As with clenched hands and earnest mien. He exclaimed, “Men—I have forged my own fortune!” The only class of forging not punishable by law. As Sir Joseph would tell you. For he knows something about law. Though he is a Justice of the Peace. And almost in spite of it. For he was intended for the bar. And never got further than an occasional visit there. In search of spiritual refreshment. Which is no *bar sinister* upon the escutcheon. Of the most moderate drinker and thinker. Who ever professed Radical proclivities. And practised liberal measures. And waits. For the time. When the people will be better off. And elect their own aldermen.

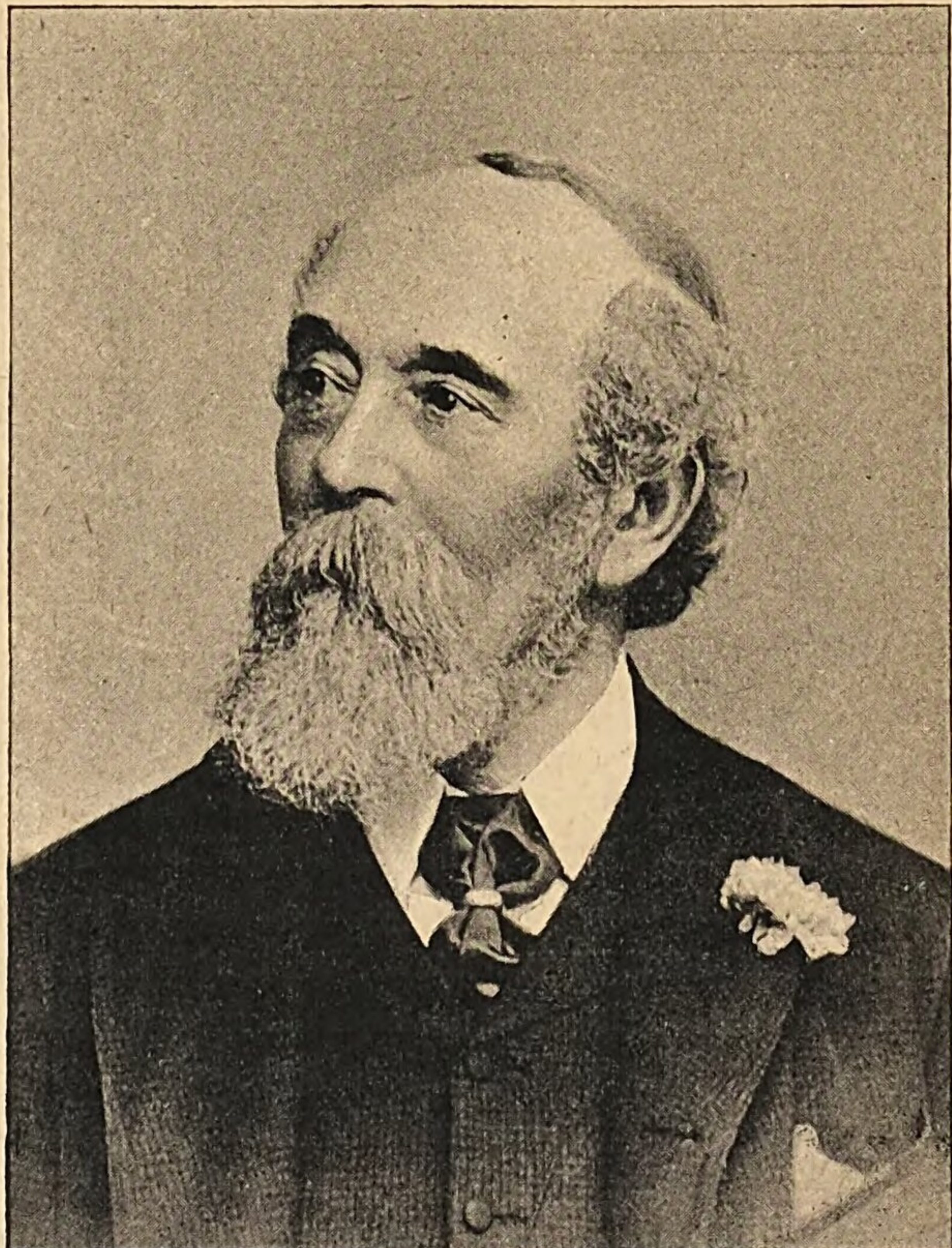
Sir Joseph lives at Dorset House. Clifton Down. A visit to which signifies a pleasurable episode. And demonstrates the higher art aspirations of its owner's domesticity. Everything—commercially speaking—touched by Sir Joseph. Turns into gold. So in giving his hand—matrimonially speaking. The result was—Lady Weston. A lady so amiable. As to prove beyond all other and more worldly testimony. That Sir Joseph is a man of rare taste. And fortunate ability to gratify it. In other things also. For his beautiful home is no ordinary residence. But an extraordinary fine art depository. Walls have ears. It is their misfortune that they have not been popularly accredited with eyes. For those at Dorset House bear the painted burden. Of the finest collection of Müller's pictures. That great and versatile Bristol artist has left for heritage. A genius who depicted equally nobly. The happiness of peace. The wretchedness of war. The sublimity of the storm. Who painted like lightning. And charged like thunder.

Sir Joseph Weston was born in Bristol. And was, as I have stated. Intended for the law. But by a series of family accidents. His studies at Cambridge were cut short, before long. And he entered his father's business. Which, like his will, was of the iron order. His association with that gold-earning metal did not end here. For he has erected ironworks at West Bromwich. And at Cwm Bran. Which is not on the map.

Nor within the possibilities of an Englishman's articulation. But is near Newport. All these were afterwards united. In the bonds of the Patent Nut and Bolt Company, Limited. Of which Sir Joseph has been chairman for many years. As he has been of many other mighty concerns. And still is. Two of the largest individual industries in the West of England. Call Sir Joseph—"Father." Being the only things that can legitimately do so. And they are. The Great Western Cotton Works. Company Limited. And the Bristol Waggon Works. Company Limited. But to catalogue the concerns with which Sir Joseph is assimilated. Necessitates invidious and needless labour. Sir Joseph Weston. Is—Commercial Bristol. The two are as closely associated. As brandy and soda.

Before representing his townsmen in the Parliamentary bear-garden. Sir Joseph had obtained considerable experience and less profit. By holding similar office in the local Kindergarten. And in 1868 entered the Town Council. In expiation for certainly an insufficient number of sins. He was greatly instrumental in supplying Bristol with Free Libraries. And has a *penchant* for books generally. As his wisely chosen collection at Dorset House exemplifies. Though I was surprised to

notice. For Sir Joseph is in Parliament. And have taken it as testifying to the Puritanism of the man. That not a single blue-book stood out in evidence against him. Having long been the local municipal hack. Sir Joseph became Mayor in 1880. And for the first time for five hundred years. Kept the office for four successive, but



Yours truly
J. Weston

not easy, terms. Which speaks volumes for his good nature. And the illimitability of his purse. For in Bristol more than other places. It is money that makes the Mayor to go. And to stay.

"It gives me unbounded pleasure." In effect wrote Mr. Gladstone in 1886. "To recommend to Her Majesty for the honour of knighthood, one who so thoroughly deserved honour for his local achievements, and who has also done the State good service in the House of Commons." In this compliment to Joseph Dodge Weston. The city of Bristol was being honoured. Through its most wide-awake citizen. For one would be the fortunate finder of many worms. And arise very early in the day. To get the best of the knight. Who had lost his seat at Westminster. For having kept his head on Home Rule. And not joined the benighted Unionists. But the to be-knighted Gladstonians. But he was not in retirement for long. Being chosen upon the death of Mr. Cossham. To stand for East Bristol. Against two opponents. Obtained the trifling majority of 2,875. Against both his friends the enemy. And has in consequence got nigh the safest seat in Parliament. And the least expensive. For it is not likely to be contested recklessly.

In the dining-room at Dorset House. Is a large silver vase. Which I learned from an inscription thereon. Spoke to the most beneficial piece of work done by its owner. And for the city. In spite of an unblemished character. No one in Bristol has had a greater experience of the Dock. Than Sir Joseph Weston. Who was chosen for the then deemed nigh impossible task. Of purchasing Bristol's two amphibious rivals. Situated on both sides of the mouth of the Avon. And who were waging a disastrous war of tariffs with Bristol proper. The accomplishment of the impossible was Sir Joseph's reward. Likewise the vase. And a big mark in local history.

Though an able controversialist. And employing only strictly Parliamentary language. Sir Joseph is not a great speaker. But his diamond shirt-stud sparkles in conversation. He belies his second name. By a steady fixity of purpose. And wears his years lightly. And holds his head erect. And is the best dressed man in Bristol. He was in no hurry to marry. And is less than most Benedicts. Likely to repent at leisure. Some of his views are sound. If they are nothing else. And he might be a Socialist. If Socialism was more respectable. And not so dreadfully lowering. Unlike his conversation, his church is broad. And he is an upright, downright good fellow.

CHARLES TOWNSEND, Esq., M.P.

CHARLES TOWNSEND is the leader of the Bristol Radicals. And in a more northern city would be dubbed a good Liberal. He is local to the house in which he was born. And loyal. For he and his family, if they have not always lived there. Have there made their living. And have waxed prosperous and powerful. For Union Street is strength. He was born on June 6th, 1832. The day previous to the passing of the great Reform Bill. An instance of Nature's prodigality in great events. Received the education which is the lot of little boys. But which included a sound business training. For he was destined to take his father's place. In the firm of Ferris & Co., wholesale druggists. A firm endowed with perpetual life. And the means of depriving other people of theirs. If some tons of deadly poisons count for anything. In the sphere of possibilities.

Mr. Townsend for many years managed the big concern. Of which he is the senior partner. And not only furthered its interests in the byways and pathways. But represented it "on the road." In 1859 he tasted the sweets of connubial life. By marrying a sugar refiner's daughter. His earliest recollections cover his election. To the Bristol Town Council in 1872. And a respect for old associations. Which every good Radical is unduly possessed of. Has prevented a severance of this pleasant connection. Between him and his fellow townsmen. Who have never paid him the questionable compliment. Of asking him to contest the seat. This is a union of hearts and good souls. For Mr. Townsend is married to his Ward. Yclept the District.

Mr. Townsend is one of that distinguished band of representative Bristolians. Who have never been mayors of the city. And—by a strange coincidence. Are members of the Liberal party. But for the last ten years he has been Chairman of the Liberal Association. A cocoaopolitan caucus chief. Similar to a Brummagem Schnadhorst. Yeoman's service to his party he has rendered. And when the most difficult feat of its handicap had to be accomplished. And Bristol North despoiled of its Liberal-Unionist representation. And though Mr. Townsend had other fish to fry. He stood up for the seat *in propria persona*. And was chosen as a fit and proper person to sit down in it. And the General Election of 1892. Made Charles Townsend Member of Parliament for Bristol North. And imposed seclusion upon Mr. Lewis Fry. For how long, how long?

Charles Townsend is a short, middle-aged gentleman. Inclined to greatness—laterally. Who bows his head—slightly. And speaks with emphasis and a local accent. And with a practical knowledge of his subject. That will surely be appreciated for its rarity. In the club to which he has just been elected. Is a strong advocate of social reforms. And

would like to see a larger representation of labour—in the “House.” And on the Bench. Not the work bench. As a Bristol Justice of the Peace. He has more than the usual reason for holding strong views. Upon this last subject. For in Bristol the employer not



*Yours faithfully,
Charles Townsend*

only locks his men out. But should occasion arise. Has the further advantage of being able to lock them up.

Charles Townsend is an active member of the Boundaries Extension Committee. And displays considerable interest in most local manifestations of unrest. On six days of the week he rests at business. On the seventh, he labours at church. For Mr. Townsend has an objection to being in the fashion. And is openly religious. And does not object to demonstrate the same in the open. He is on the side of Temperance. And legislation, so called. Is a tough reader. But has never perused his own speeches. And pleads want of time. Not inability to suffer martyrdom. He owns to an honest pride in his big business. And personally conducted me on a circular tour. Of the Union Street establishment.

Where I saw something of the manufacture of pills. Not necessarily for home consumption only. And on a truly gigantic scale. There were little pills and large pills. And pills of all colours

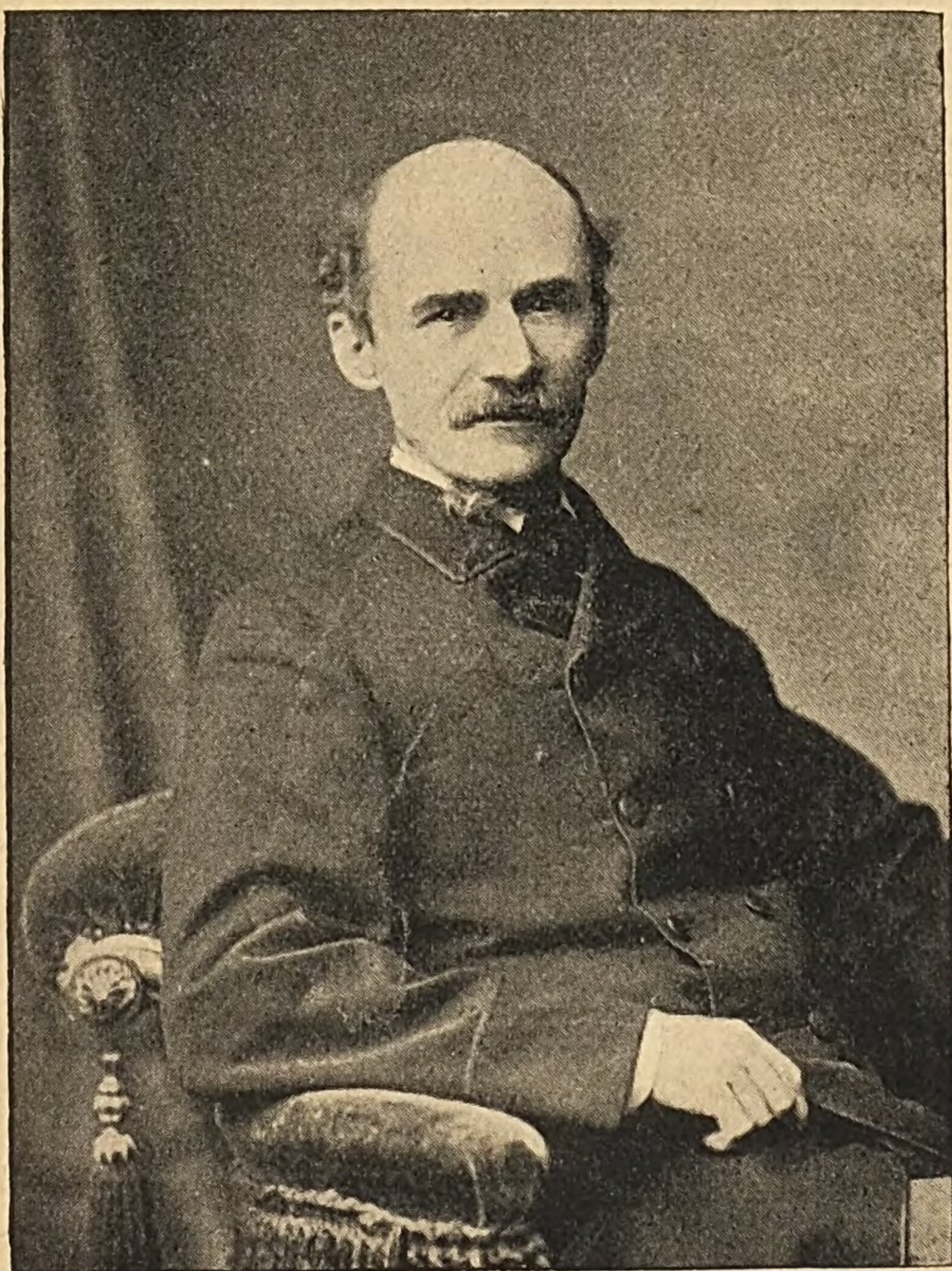
—and tastes—and representations. They were there in their hundreds of thousands. And, paradoxical as it may seem. Are not a drug in the market. I was taken into room upon room. Devoted to the mixing of the mixtures. About which the doctor knows so little. And which he prescribes for bodies about which he knows less.

I saw a wonderful collection of murderous mysteries. Known to the world through surgical sophistries. For the cutting up and better mutilation of the human form divine. Large numbers of hands were employed on the manufacture of artificial legs. Et cetera. Wide awake as all this kept me. I have never before experienced such a dose. Of the things that make for good. In the medicine man's prescription. The room containing the poisons was one of the first I had inspected. It was as well. But with such reserved power as this. The new member for Bristol North need not wage war upon his political opponents. By making speeches. Which, if as deadly. Are not so swift. Nor so humanitarian.

He lives at Stoke Bishop in a charming house. But is a member of the Liberal Club. His visits to which are prescribed. To about three times a day. *Before* meals.

WALTER REID.

IS editor of the *Western Daily Press*. And its proprietor. And, in company with the late Mr. P. S. Macliver—its founder. Is partly responsible for the first daily paper



in the West of England. Which is responsible for Heaven alone knows what. Born at Newcastle-on-Tyne in the "thirties." First spilt ink on the maternal tablecloth. Then on the *Newcastle Guardian*. As reporter. *Newcastle Guardian* "*non est*." Cause and effect. Boy the father of the man. And inclined to editorship at sixteen. He and another man with similar patriarchal record. Were delivered of amateur productions. For the confusion of cranks. And other mechanical nuisances. They had elevated leanings. And lofty aspirations. And a motto. "*Because ye are virtuous, shall there be no more cakes and ale?*" Could not compete with the *Licensed Victuallers'*

Gazette. And left a world that would not be saved from temperance. Has since modified opinion. And is a non-abstaining teetotaller. Whose favourite

Yours very truly
Walter Reid

poison is tea. And is abstemious in ultra-moderation. He does not smoke. Except as a medicine. For neuralgia. And chews neither the cud nor anything else. Has only one worldly fault. The courage of his opinions.

It was in "fifty-eight." That Mr. Macliver and Walter Reid left Newcastle. For Bristol's good—morning newspaper. Like wise men they came from the north-east. Due south-west. Bristol had suffered most things. And had already its newspapers. Which came out once a week, more or less regularly. At a cost of fourpence. The *Western Daily Press* changed all that. And was procurable by all but the absolutely penny-less. Like the poor, the *Western Daily Press* has always been with us since. But unlike the poor, is an undisguised blessing. And the greatest power for good in the West countree. May its circulation never grow less.

Walter Reid, like most great men, is spared many inches. And has not run to waist. For he is as slim as his own son. And as active. Which son is his right hand. And left globe-circumnavigation to assist in the evolution of the paternal favourite. The newspaper aforesaid. His front names are William Nichol. And he is the worthy son of a worthy sire.

Walter Reid once strayed from the paths of routine journalism. And wrote original fiction. Which was published in one volume. And entitled "Off Land's End." Was received so favourably that the author saw fame in the near future as a "writer of books." So never wrote another. And escaped being famous. As a modest man should. Besides he cannot now sink to three-volume form. His own great work is represented by sixty-three volumes. Of the *Western Daily Press*. Which I saw, and counted. But did not peruse. And which he was compelled to publish himself. Has a few small indiscretions, which take the shape of magazine articles. Which go off—as is appropriate—well. And make some considerable noise in the world of letters. But, as I have hinted. His *Daily Press* labours have claimed him most. In the year 1890 was printed the ten thousandth-number of this paper. Every one of these bore the ink-stained finger impressions of Walter Reid. Which is stating a fact as surprising as it is unique. Both paper and editor are thoroughly Liberal. Politically also. The *Daily Press* is not only read by Liberals. But by Conservatives as well. This is a strikingly complimentary instance. Of the soberness of its contents. The reliability of its pronouncements. And the fairness of its deductions. Which conclusions I draw from my own calculations and researches.

Walter Reid is not only a journalistic beacon. But holds a candle up to journalism. Which he extols as the king of professions. And one of the most honourable. It is moving steadily onward, progressing always. Having had, metaphorically speaking, a fire-grate past. But a greater, or gas-stove future. All—journalist and journalisted alike. Will share in the growing appreciation for. The fourth estate. Which men like Walter Reid. And others whom it would be invidious—if not immodest—to mention. Have made first in importance. What time he is not devoting to his paper, he devotes to other recreations. Such as tennis. And Tennyson. Not to speak of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare. And poetry generally. Does not read many books. Though glances at several. *Modus operandi* of professional reviewer strong. Even in retirement from reviewing. Reads only one daily paper. Ninety-nine people out of a hundred would err. If they guessed which. For that one is the *Newcastle Chronicle*. Which lies on his desk and on his conscience simultaneously. Has frequently intended reading *The Western*

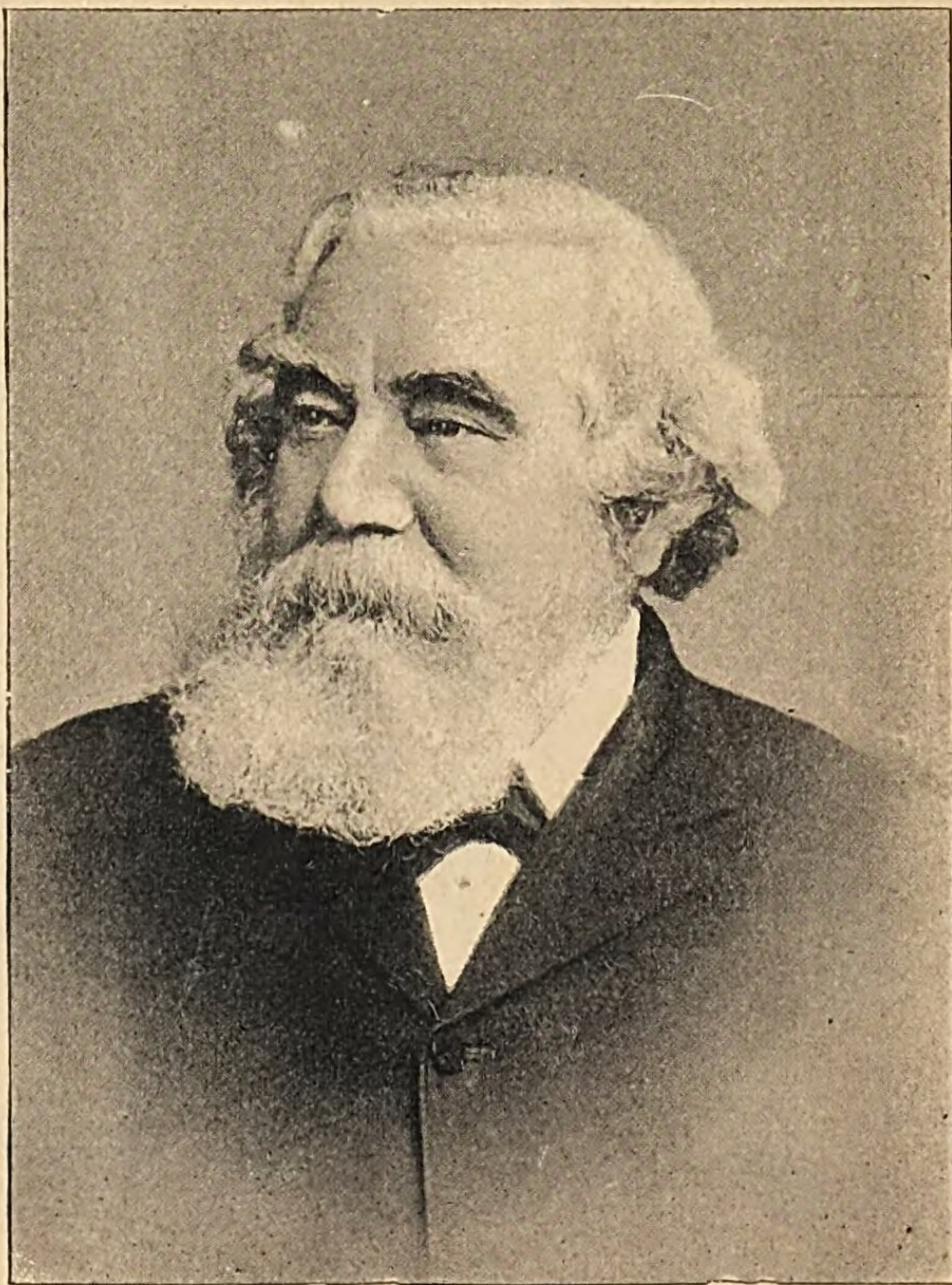
Daily Press. But has failed in the necessary leisure. Or courage. So he suffers less for his opinions. Than do the readers thereof.

Walter Reid has turned sixty, and grey. If it were not for these certificated and visible facts to the contrary I should call him a young man. In specs and a black tie. Courtesy mingles with courtliness, when he listens. As does intelligence with literary style, when he speaks. With vivacity and a Northumbrian accent. He thinks and says good of everything. And, stranger still, well of everybody. Is a loyal adopted child of the old city. Of which he knows nothing but good. And upon which he will not allow to be cast the shade of a shadow of a reflection. Even its aldermen he holds in veneration. Blinder, if not greater love for a cause than this, is not possible. To mortal man. It may be different with the angels. Whose opinions would necessarily be tempered by the law of extremes. He thinks Socialists sincere. But their Socialism impossible. Would like to put their ideals in practice. If practicable. For it is not the best of all possible worlds. For many. Leads sedentary life. So is fond of long country walks. And has original method of indulgence. Because he allows a vehicle to take him where he wants to go. And walks back. An ordinary person would pedestrate half-way there. And then walk back. But would miss the ride. Which, locally, is an encouragement to pedestrianism. And a vindication of that method of traversing space.

Walter Reid does not live in a glass-house. Though he might do so with equanimity. For there are no people who would make him. The object of their stone-throwing aims. But he resides at Cotham. And only a Cliftonian can gauge from this simple fact. The self-abnegation of the man.

THOMAS DAVID TAYLOR.

“NO; this is the Post Office.” I was looking for something else. The offices of the *Bristol Times and Mirror*. I was growing desperate. For the search had been a long one. When I saw an opening. Out of my difficulty, and leading to the Parcel Post Department. And the offices of the missing paper. I entered. Could I see the editor? Bewilderment. Was it Mr. Taylor I wanted? And if so— which? Or Mr. Hawkins? I repeated my request for an interview with the editor. More bewilderment. They would go and see what was to be done. And they went and saw. And the scene was changed. For I was shown to “one of the partners.” Mr. Walter Hawkins. Of the firm of T. D. Taylor, Sons, & Hawkins. Who run the *Bristol Times and Mirror*. Which is a unique thing in newspapers. For it is edited *by the firm*. And published daily. At so much per copy. It is worked upon the most approved business principles. So I was assured. And so I believe. I was not able to see Mr. T. D. Taylor. The head of the firm. Nor his son. Who is one of its legs. But I found Mr. Hawkins both able and willing. To give me such information as might assist me in my work. To him, therefore, I explained. That I must have an editor for my



Faithfully Yours
T. D. Taylor

purpose. The firm in its corporate capacity would not do. So they offered up to me the personality of T. D. Taylor. The senior partner. And most representative man in the concern.

"Tom Taylor" is a real bit of old Bristol. For he was born there in 1823. His characteristics are patriarchal. For he has an aureole of white hair. And a slight stoop. So is not an unbending Tory. His conversation has a tendency to run to wit. And he is famous for his *bon-mots*. He has sons and daughters. The former are "in the business." He has a fondness for pictures. And Toryism. And dumb animals. And is a liberal supporter of all. A love for paintings was his earliest enthusiasm. But he "let go the painter," and drifted into journalism. He is still the "leading article" of his daily paper. Which he visits weekly. He has hobbies. Which are more easily carried off than most people's. For his particular idiosyncrasy is "walking sticks." Of which he has an extraordinary collection. Obtained by unusually honest methods. And circumspection. So profound is his grasp of the subject. That he is able to tell of what a walking stick is made. By the merest contact. Which is touching. But authentic. Is a prop himself. Of the local Conservative party. And lends the necessary air of respectability-*cum-bonhomie*. To their public meetings.

In the good old days. Tom Taylor's ground lay in the manufacture of political squibs. Which used to be let off with volubility. And a caution. Was a great Nimrod. And followed the hounds. Dear memories of the past.

Tom Taylor succeeded his father. The late John Taylor. As is usual. But in the management of the paper. And ink may be said to run in his blood. Prior to that, had gone to Bath. In 1859. And become proprietor and editor of *Bath Chronicle*. But returned to his native city. In 1863. It is at the most conjecture. But I am of opinion that the position of the *Times and Mirror* in journalism. Is due almost solely to his directing hand. And his *locus standi*. There is inspiration in his presence. And in these remarks about him. Though retiring in disposition. He sticks to his post. And if old in years. Has deteriorated naught in spirit. Good old Tom!

HAROLD LEWIS.

THE office of the *Bristol Mercury* is in Broad Street. And must have had many a narrow squeak from destruction in the stormy past. And must shake considerably in the stormy present. If the wind blows from the wrong quarter. It has an ancient tavern on one side of it. An ancients gate and chapel on the other. Age commands respect. I respect the offices of the *Bristol Mercury*. Many in Bristol do. At a respectful distance. Which is not quite the same thing. For the *Mercury* flies apace. And is Radical. Ultra-Radical, that is. For Bristol. And Bristol! But that is another story.

Harold Lewis was in his office. In a chair—the editorial seat. It is roomy. So is Mr. Lewis. Who is a Bachelor of Arts (London). And a Benedict (Bristol). Speaks with hesitancy. But softly. And with authority. For he knows much about newspapers generally. And the *Bristol Mercury* in particular. Which is not too particular what it says. When it says it. Which is when it means it. Most outspoken advocate. Unlike most Radical things. Has a hoary genealogical tree. With branches up-to-date. And for the receipt of advertisements.

“Mercury” is the oldest of newspaper names. And, according to Mr. Lewis, the most scholarly. For Mercury was a deity of parts, and the messenger of the gods. The local one still plays to them. It had a beginning in 1715. Which is the only con-



Yours faithfully
Harold Lewis

servative thing about it. It was called *The Bristol Weekly Mercury from Holland, France, Spain, etc.* America, it appears, had not then been discovered. Hence the omission. In 1814 a copy of the *Mercury* cost 7d. In 1818 its editor was Mr. T. F. Manchee. Who infused new life into it. It was enlarged, and published articles—not of light—but leading. And these are generally heavy. Perhaps because they are “leaded.” In 1829 Mr. W. H. Somerton became editor. Then, as they say in America, things began to hum. The opportunity came. The man was already there. India has its “ryots.” Bristol had its. And that black page in its history has filled many of the *Mercury*. With well-told news. And exact reports. In 1883—exit Mr. Somerton. Enter the proprietors of the *Bath Herald*. William Lewis & Son. William Lewis is the father. Harold Lewis is the son. He employs no ghost. But does his own leaders. Which have a refreshing distinctiveness. As any Bristol Tory will concede. Though he would make the concession in a strange manner.

Mr. Lewis is of opinion that competing with the London dailies is out of the question. In a city like Bristol. Two hours and a half from the metropolis. So he aims to localise his paper. By giving all the attention local matters deserve. And a bit over. Has strong opinions about signed journalism. But not sure in which direction they run. Neither am I. And we discussed this point from a broad standpoint. For long. He wears a brown beard and *pince-nez*. Has few hobbies. Going to the play one of them. Freemasonry another. Volunteering another. But stranger than all—goes in for politics. And editor of the *Mercury*! Actually believes what he prints. And practises what he writes. Is a Captain in the Bristol Engineers. And has one great fear in life. That he may one day be made a Major. Which is no minor matter. For then he would have to ride a horse. Has hitherto pursued his study of that noble animal from behind. As far behind as possible. May have inadvertently taken horse inside. For he is not a vegetarian. But has assuredly never been outside one. If it comes off, so will Mr. Lewis.

Is a “heavy” reader. But recreates in Dickens—for choice. Is not a “live” journalist. For he has made a study of the dead languages. Though he is but mortal. Lives in the odour of sanctity. More by accident than design. Is bounded on the one side by an archdeacon. On another by a vicar. While curates and such like things abound in his vicinity. Which is Brandon Hill way. Has no other troubles. Is in sympathy with Socialism. But his own. Not that of the Socialists. Who naturally don’t understand the subject. But is not a Socialist. Not even of a self-evolved type. And smokes. In the evening only. Consumes ink during the day. Couldn’t sleep if he didn’t smoke. And must sleep. One of the laws of nature. And not even a Radical will try to alter those. Drinks in moderation. Is greatly liked by his “staff.” Who never “strike.” Considers and speaks of all, as his “colleagues.” Great *esprit de corps* in the *Mercury* office in consequence. Stick to the paper for many years. Chief reporter been there for thirty-two. His name—James Crosby.

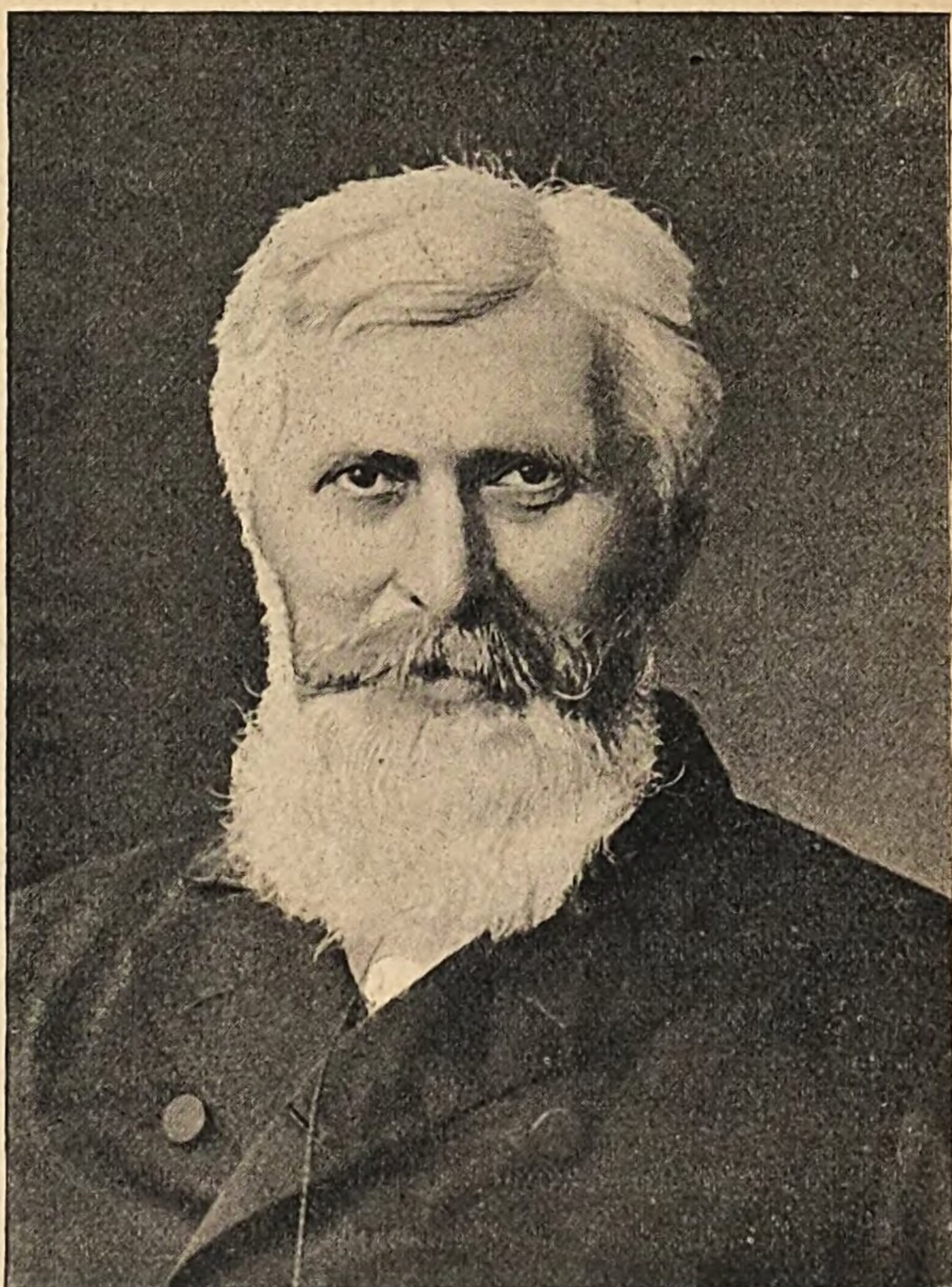
Harold Lewis is active member of local Liberal party. He is the most gentlemanly “revolutionist” I have ever seen. And is not a “revolutionist.” Though he inclines to getting round. Yet does everything on the square.

THE REV. DR. RICHARD GLOVER.

THE red sandstone of which Tynedale Church, Bristol, is constructed reminds me that

“ Abner Dean of Angel’s raised a point of order—when,
A chunk of old red sandstone
took him in the abdomen.”

Which again reminds me of Bret Harte’s heathen Chinees. And there is much in common between Tynedale Church and the Asiatic Celestial. As a delightful conversation with the pastor of the first-mentioned proved to me. For the Rev. Dr. Richard Glover had not long before returned. From a visit to that land of tea and heathendom. Whither he had gone on a missionary mission. Where he saw his see. Said his say. And came back to make his report. Which was of a satisfying character. And optimistic. He had found that everything Chinese was intensely interesting. Intensely dirty. Intensely hopeful. Intensely puzzling. The Chinese have prejudices. Against becoming Christianised. They foster erroneous beliefs as to Christianity’s purports. And its methods. One of which is the provision of actual non-Christian blood. For the Communion service. A wicked and monstrous calumny. Which through good or evil. Has generally been monopolised by certain Christians against the Jews. The troubles of the Chinese missionaries are almost entirely due to this notion. Which has shed more Christian than



Yours truly
Richard Glover

non-Christian blood. But good work is being done. The noble doctrine preached receives many equally noble examples. In the daily life of the representative Christian missionaries. Many of whom are Baptists. As is the Rev. Dr. Glover. Whose community has laboured long and earnestly for the support of such work. The mountain would not go to Mahomet. So Christianity must be taken to, and preached from, the mountain.

Tall, white-headed, soft-eyed, gentle in manner, Dr. Glover is a striking personage. He is a Bristolian. By adoption. For he is but another of that wonderful group of men. Who are reared in the North. And who give to other cities. The energy, ability, and strong individuality. That were meant for all Tyneside. South Shields was his birthplace. And in that the Reverend Doctor showed much wisdom. For Shields is a "cannie" toon." Which is situated at the mouth of the coaly Tyne. And is sheltered by some of the most picturesque rocky headlands. That ever spelt death and destruction to storm-tossed mariner. It grew great from a few fisher huts. In the days of chivalry. Which were always associated with Shields. Terrot Glover was Richard Glover's father. Though not his only claim to distinction. Obtained in 1857. For he did for Shields what Richard Whittington did for London. And thrice filled its Mayoral chair.

Dr. Glover obtained his degree at Edinburgh University. Which is a few degrees too far north for most Englishmen. He came to Bristol in 1869. But had previously "preached the Word" in Glasgow. For eight years. Now only a pleasant memory. For life in Bristol is composed of actual facts. He is the life and soul of his Church. Which has never known another head. Since the erection of the beautiful building. In one of the handsomest parts of the city. Which is what its wealthy supporters desired it to be. One of the most desirable little houses of worship in the land. The Baptist fraternity has a connection with Bristol of over two centuries. It has had the advantage of a college of instruction for 200 years. And the assistance of some of the most esteemed and most worldly—goods—blessed Bristolians. But its rapid increase as a body is primarily due to its missionary enterprise. Which ever found "fresh woods and pastures new" for its labours.

Dr. Glover is a charming conversationalist. Yet listens well in a number of languages. He uses *pince-nez* when he reads. And a Northumbrian accent when he speaks. He never deemed it right that man should live alone. And has a wife, two daughters, and one son. The former are at Westfield Park. The latter is at Cambridge. Making a brilliant name for himself. And is the best, as well as the youngest, Fellow. In Cambridge.

Dr. Glover has not any hobbies. But is a politician. And takes part in "healthy politics." Which presumably cannot be for House of Commons consumption. Is a Radical. But is not an "anti" anything. And has, in fact, an antipathy to the word. Though he is an abstainer. And neither sacrifices to alcohol. Nor, like some modern grates. Consumes his own smoke. Is an indefatigable worker. In any good cause. And will offer a helping hand to another denomination. Should occasion offer. Which is most unusual. And bad etiquette. He was President of the Baptist Union in 1885-86. And does not know that he is leading one of the most unselfish and revered lives. In Bristol. Or out of it.

THE REV. A. N. BLATCHFORD.

AMBROSE BLATCHFORD is a Unitarian minister. So that denomination in Bristol is to be heartily congratulated. He is less like a parson than anything else in creation. For were there more ministers such as he. There would be fewer doubters such as——. The missing word can be filled in at the reader's pleasure. To describe him is difficult. He is large primarily. Physically, mentally, and cardiacally. He is a happy, homely, humorous homily. Breezy as the wind. Tender as a woman. And as honest as a Bank of England note. He is a mischievous mystery. Combining intellectual greatness, with unministerial tolerance. And strives to appear to those "outside." As one who speaks with sincerity. And acts without animosity. He considers that God gave us life. But that we live as we make it. One need not be Christian less. Because one is Bohemian more.



Sincerely yours

Ambrose N. Blatchford

Ambrose Blatchford is a Devonian. Which is, next to being minister of Lewin's

Mead Chapel. The thing he is proudest of. Was born in Plymouth. In 1842. He was educated at the old Tavistock Grammar School. By the Rev. Edward Spencer, M.A.

In the opinion of Mr. Blatchford. The most human clergyman who ever lived. And one who shed a lustrous greatness upon the Church of England. What good there is in himself, he owes to the teaching of that man. The bad was acquired without extraneous assistance. At sweet seventeen he entered Manchester New College. London. Since removed to Oxford. Where he sat at the feet of men. Like the late Rev. John James Taylor and Dr. James Martineau. Then he arose, and attended the classes of the University College. Where he had the advantage of being instructed by F. W. Newman. Brother of the great Cardinal. And where he became a Bachelor. Of Arts. Obtained the Hibbert Scholarship in 1864. And then left the ranks of the taught. And joined those of the torturers. And was ordained a minister. To the assistance of his late and loved friend and senior. The Rev. William James. At Lewin's Mead, Bristol. In 1866. And he has never known another congregation. And to its credit let it be added. Never deserves to.

It has made history. Has Lewin's Mead Chapel. Or, as the old trust deed has it—

“The meeting-house of the ancient society of Protestant Dissenters assembling in Lewin's Mead, for the worship of Almighty God.”

Which has a broad embrace. And would not exclude a Mohammedan. The honour of the congregation is vested in its minister. And has ever been safe in his keeping. In all the days of this congregation it has represented much that was best in Bristol. At one time, with one exception. Its members included the whole Aldermanic bench. And at present! But that is another matter.

The Rev. Ambrose Blatchford is an advanced thinker. And is ever striving to minimise the asperities between the minister and the man. He both drinks and smokes. In moderation. And will discuss everything. But theology. Which he detests. Is an earnest politician. And when not at Redland or Lewin's Mead. Is to be found at a house of Gladstone worship. In Corn Street. He once nearly performed a miracle. Many good souls in Bristol believed. That the earth would stop revolving on its axis. Or that they would cease from grinding theirs. All on account of the Rev. Ambrose Blatchford. Who had delivered a lecture. Entitled, *A Tribute to the Memory of Charles Bradlaugh*. And who, it was thought, must have lost his head. Because he—a minister—was of opinion. That the same fate had not befallen the dead man's soul. Had he not lived a great life? Though he had not known God. Perhaps because there were so many bigots in the world. And I will add—so few ministers like the lecturer. Or congregations like that of Lewin's Mead. But though he surprised many, he hurt no one. For it is impossible that he should have aught but friends. In the tolerant old city. I first met the Rev. Mr. Blatchford at a large public dinner. Everything and everybody was represented at the boards. The Mayor and Sheriff lent dignity. The Dean—said grace. While one side of the great gas works of the nation. Was Liberally represented. Philistinism in every aspect attended the feast. Music, the drama, and the powers of the sword and the pen. Through their accredited representatives partook of the good cheer. Which was as a whisper. Compared with that which greeted the rising of the subject. Of this pen and ink sketch. Who was of all men there present. The most loved, the most esteemed, the

most admired. And I gathered from this vociferous incident. An insight into the man's hold upon Bristol society. Such as his modest personal references could never have given me.

Marriage had no terrors for this brave man. And he has three children. Assorted. With whom he romps in his serious moments. As a speaker, he engulfs one. You are surrounded by his presence. Which metaphorically grasps you and holds you captive. In its hurricane embraces. He is vigorous by turns. But animated long. And speaks with twinkling eyes. Interspersed with Latin quotations. He preaches extempore. To him a written sermon is like walking in wooden shoes. The keynote of his sermons is the Fatherhood of God. And it is not pitched too high. And the older he grows the more he loves preaching. And the younger he gets. And is to be found among the most energetic members of committees for local public works. He wears turn-down collars, a winning smile, and soft felt hats. With a lapse into "a rigid cylinder" on Sundays. Has another weakness. A fondness for poetry. *Morceaux* of which garnish his conversation. Has a great liking for history. Which is the subject he lectures most upon. For it allows so much play to the imagination.

Boating is his hobby. With its attendant follies. Such as fishing. And catching things. Mostly colds. Every year. At Seaton. South Devon. Love of the sea hereditary. For his mother's family for generations. Got their livings and came by their deaths on it. Has a boat of his own. Which is called "The Raven." Shall I ever look upon his like again? *Never more!*

J. W. ARROWSMITH.

WAS not born. But published. Issued from the press in 1839. In the office of the *Worcester Chronicle*. Left native city in disgust. Could not compete in quality

with the local staple production. So came to Bristol when fourteen years young. And has never been heard of since.



John Fergus
Arrowsmith

First achieved immortality through Frederick John Fergus. More widely known—and read—as Hugh Conway. Who wrote *Called Back*. And invented that nineteenth century horror. The shilling shocker. Remarkable man, with most remarkable history. Though kindly disposed to all, spent his pre-ink-spilling days in “knocking down.” To the highest bidder. Was friend of Arrowsmith. Before the latter became his publisher. And stranger still. For as long afterwards as cruel fate permitted. No book ever printed obtained such amazing popularity as *Called Back*. Or such a circulation. The tale about the story is an interesting one. And I must ask Mr. Arrowsmith to excuse me. While I relate it.

Fergus broke out in a strange place. And wrote poetry. Which was published by Kegan Paul. And was entitled—*A Life's Idylls*. Friend Arrowsmith remonstrated. Not like a true

friend, at his writing poetry. But at forgetting that he also was a publisher. And was already of opinion. That a residence and an expensive suite of offices in the Metropolis. Were not necessarily a *sine quâ non* for successful publication. An office in the provinces—

Bristol would do. And if a printing office, so much the better. With good business man in possession. Could make its expenses—and a little over—from another man's brains. As well as any London middle-man of them all. Fargus converted; and the story begins.

Then, ruminated the publisher Arrowsmith. I will gather together what talent run-to-ink the city affords. I will give them eat and drink. And they can make merry at my expense. And we will strive for the good of the whole company. And each other's. So this happened. And they were thirteen in number. All good men and true. And a fearful scheme was projected. Of a local annual. Which should have a more than local popularity. And in which every member of that dinner party should do something. Mr. Arrowsmith's share being the publishing. It was produced. It was the first number of the famous "Bristol Annuals." It was called *Thirteen at dinner*. And was a ghastly failure. As was the next. A story by May Crommelin. And then Fargus said. "*I will have a try.*" And he was tried. And did six weeks labour. And came unto the said Arrowsmith. And asked his opinion as to the title. "Anything in two words, if possible," said the publisher. And sitting down, Fargus struck off the following as specimens:—*Clouds. Light from Darkness. From Darkness to Light. At one Time of my Life. Not Impossible. Scattered Clouds. Husband and Wife. A Method in his Madness. Jangled and out of tune. Dawn—at last. Between Ourselves. Hope Deferred.* Which were all struck out. For as Arrowsmith paid his money, he could take his choice. And then Fargus scribbled—almost without thought—the words *Called Back*. And they found favour in the eyes of the publisher. And were chosen.

Called Back made little progress. The public did not care sixpence for it. The price it was first published at. Then came the month of January. And the voice of *Truth* was heard. In the shape of a complimentary par. And *Called Back* belied its name. And raced ahead into public favour. It was printed for eighteen months as fast as machines could print it. And is still selling. Though over 356,000 copies have been disposed of. Which is a good thing for Arrowsmith. And not such a bad thing for poor Fargus after all. As the following will show:—

The publisher Arrowsmith offered the author Fargus. For the rights of the book, out and out. £80. Which the author Fargus accepted. *Vide* appended fac-simile postscript:—

P.S

If you have not settled yr
annual for next year, I will
write it for the same sum
paid him @ £80 and give
you whole copyright.

But the publisher had mistaken his vocation. For he had a conscience. Ought to have been a magistrate. May be yet. So he treated the agreement as not written. Except as to the payment of the £80. And allowed the author a royalty of twopence in the shilling. Till the end of 1886. And in this way made Fergus the richer. By two thousand four hundred and seventeen pounds. I am not writing Mr. Arrowsmith's obituary. Or it would be my duty to say nice things about him. Such as he would never have deserved when living. But I record this unique incident. And pass on without further comment. Than the hope that my own publishers will read what I have written. And go and do likewise.

Since those *Dark Days* Mr. Arrowsmith has been responsible. For voluminous book successes. Notably—*Three Men in a Boat*. Which reminds me. That I have made no mention of the dog. Which in an account of Mr. Arrowsmith. Is like the play of Hamlet. Minus the title rôle. His name is Nip. By parentage—is a terrier. And is of no occupation. But literally wags his tail without end. While reposing on the mat in the celebrated Quay-street office. Which resembles a cross between a fine-art gallery. And the lending-room of a free-and-easy library.

One volunteer is reputed to be worth twenty press'd men. So when they are combined, as in Mr. Arrowsmith's case. They should prove irresistible. And he has frequently compiled more than a good score. At Wimbledon. When he was no publisher for the time being. But a quarter-master in the 2nd Gloucester Engineers. The rifle is not the only thing he excels with. He is equally good at cannons. Which is cue-rious. For the balls used are of ivory. Though he does not despise shell-out. Has only one serious hobby. And it is in Corn-street. And is called the Liberal Club. Of which he is equally chairman and guardian angel. Is politically in sympathy with Liberalism. Which, under the circumstances, can be forgiven him. Is short-sighted. Physically. With hair inclined to grey, and waist to *embonpoint*. His friends say he is of medium height. The cannot-get-published dub him short. But he is not so short as his conversation. Which is of the blunt order. But to the point. And calculated to hit the bull's-eye at every volley. Smokes—anything. His own cigars preferred. For he has not lived in Bristol without acquiring wisdom. But does not drink. Even water—unaërated. His local experiences here again betray themselves. And his wisdom. Considers he has waded through as much as any still living publisher. What he terms “rubbish.” And he will be shot if he doesn't turn over a new leaf. Which is taking a page out of my book. And shows his acumen. Founded a wonderful penny time-table. Called the A.B.C.D. His fondness for strong language even here betraying itself. He is the most widely known of living Bristol citizens. And the works he has published will live after him. As will his shooting records. And a tranquil futurity is his. For he has aimed to do good in this world. So is bound to miss fire in the next.

GEORGE RISELEY.

GEORGE RISELEY is a remarkable man. For was born young. And in Bristol. And has remained there ever since. Since August 28th, 1845, that is. From earliest age evinced strong musical tendencies. Found their natural outlet in whistling. Entered the cathedral choir when no more than seven. Went out of it ten years later. For he was getting a big boy then. And went in for more manly pursuits. Including the organ. The organ has been included in his daily life from that time. Was organist successfully successively to three churches. St. John Baptist; St. Mary Magdalen; and All Saints. All in Bristol or thereabouts. Was appointed Cathedral organist in 1875. Was already in the service of the Colston Hall Company. Has given weekly organ recitals in the hall of that name for twenty-two years. And has in doing so. Done more to educate local musical opinion than the Bristolians are aware of. Or give him credit for. Is without doubt the greatest power for musical good in Bristol. He is first. The rest—follow.

Is a Home-Ruler.

Musically. Not politically. Has made the study of orchestral music the object of his life. To it has devoted much time, great attention, and not inconsiderable



Yours faithfully
George Riseley.

money. Is convinced that our great deficiency as a musical people. Is in the study of the orchestra. So set vigorously about the improvement of Bristol in this direction. Has trained a band at an expenditure of much brass. And more patience. From local amateurs. This orchestra he is proud of. Considers it equal to anything. Or anybody else's. Then, why not use it? Why import at enormous expense? That which can be had for next to nothing at home. Has been asking these questions for years. Is still asking them. Has not received satisfactory answers. So is going on asking. Is the only hobby he has time to cultivate. Or to speak upon. Has done so in public. Notably in Liverpool and Newcastle. At the "Incorporated Society of Musicians." Seldom discusses anything else. Even in his sleep. Though it is a subject upon which he is singularly wide-awake.

Is responsible for the Bristol Monday Pops. But he may be forgiven on this head. As he suffered severely in pocket for his temerity. For the popular concerts were not popular. They did not go off—pop. It was not then fashionable to be musical. In 1876. Rather different now. For they have become famous. And pay their way. Some grand work has been done at them. Orchestral and vocal. Nearly all our home-reared composers have conducted their own works at these gatherings. And obtained swollen results. In the receipts. Many have written specially for them. And more intend to. But sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

Mr. Riseley trains voices. Individually and collectively. Accompanied and unaccompanied. The local "Orpheus Glee Society" has been under his direction for years. In this connection it can be truthfully said. That he has quelled more noise with the baton. Than the average policeman. This Society has achieved great local reputation. Which is not so much in its favour as the praise it received from the London critics. On the occasion of its visits to the Metropolis. In 1889 and 1890. When it gave concerts in St. James's Hall. And has never been heard there. Since.

The performances of large mixed choirs and bands under Mr. Riseley have been many. Some are more noteworthy. Than others. As for instance. Beethoven's Choral Symphony. In the Colston Hall. In 1885. "Elijah" and "Israel" in the cathedral. In 1887 and 1888. And "St. Paul" and Brahms's Requiem in the Colston Hall. In 1890. Has one of the finest choirs in the kingdom. And numbers over 550 singing members. Or members who sing. Not always the same thing. In Bristol.

It is clear, therefore, that Mr. Riseley has given both reputation and education. Musically, to his native city. He is no pessimist. For he thinks that there is a great musical future before the English. Does not say how long before. Is a man of great parts. Physically. And wears both his years and moustache with ease. Has a family. Whose love of music is hereditary. For they all play something. And that, well. The girls take precedence. Both by virtue of sex and numbers. They provide their own quartettes. While you wait. And admire their father.

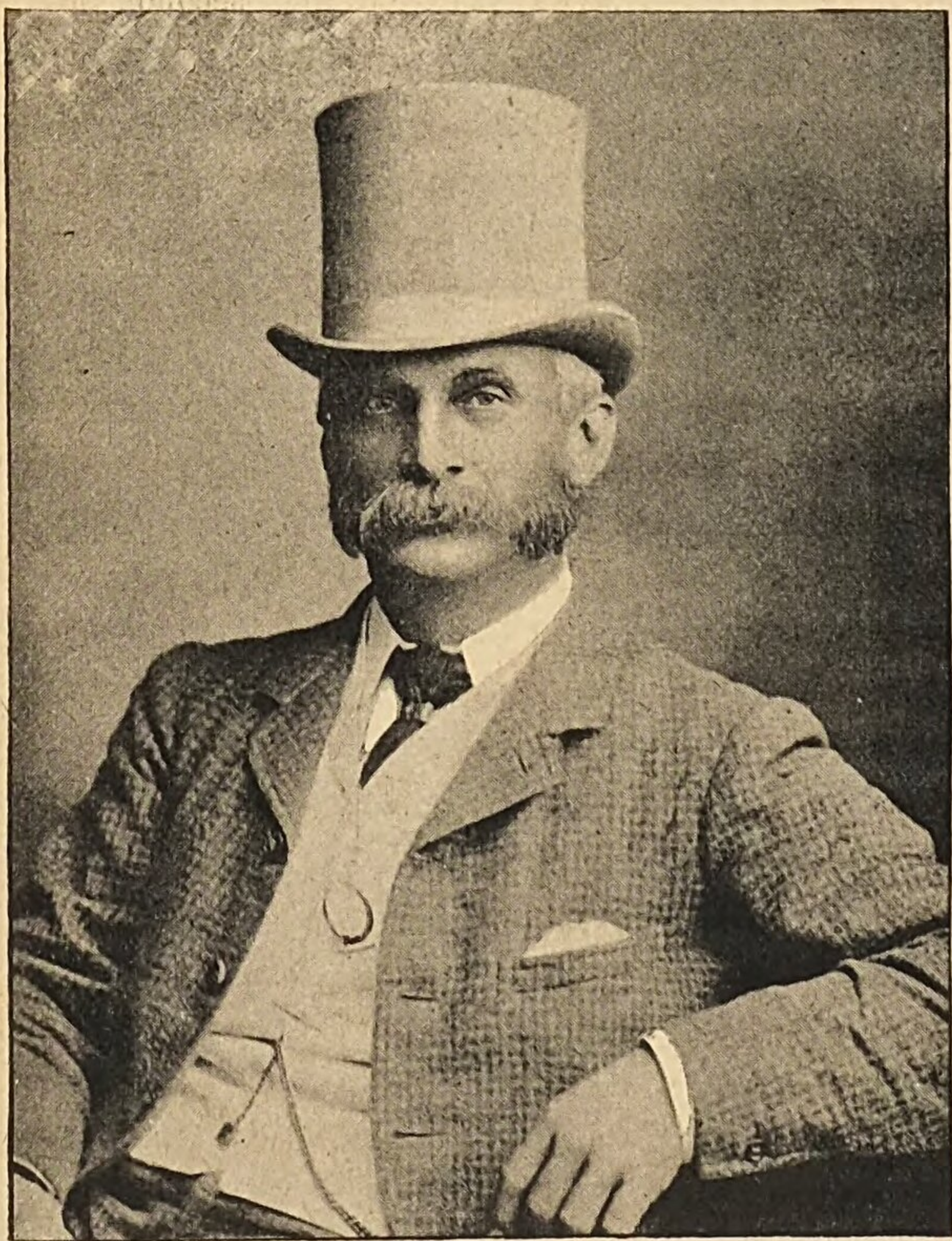
Though a musician, has no crotchets. But is a sharp task-master. That's flat. Is not sensitive to criticism. If it is flattering. And is a man of indomitable will. Of extraordinary perseverance. Of restless energy. Is fond of sport. Other than training pupils. And scenting wrong notes. Has an annual holiday. In August.

When he goes to Norway. Alone. For his game is peace. And his object fishing. When it is not shooting. With a gun. For he draws not the bow. The long. Or the violin.

He has hungry fortissimo aspirations. After creating local School of Music. Has looked to the Town Council for support. In this scheme. Is still looking. Town Council not to be found. In that way of thinking. Nothing to do with sanitation. Or boundaries. Or personalities. Or politics. The public should provide their own art. The Corporation the drains. Each party best fitted for the special subject. The city is strong vocally. If it had a complete local orchestra. With proper leaven of professionals. Everything would be possible in this best of all possible Bristols. Musically. School of Music would not only supply public want. But provide in its heads of departments the necessary firsts. Fiddles and otherwise. The seconds Mr. Riseley can manage. Also thirds and fourths. And sixths and eighths. He may gain his point. In spite of, and with, the Town Council. The greatest possible compliment to pay his powers of persuasion. And argument. And perseverance. And attention to little things.

DANIEL WILBERFORCE ROTHAM.

NUMBER SIX, Ashgrove Road, takes some finding. For one of the things they do not do better in Bristol. Is the numbering of suburban residences. I struck



Yours sincerely
D. W. Rootham

Ashgrove Road heavily. For it was dark. And the what-should-be-pavement frozen. There were two sides to Ashgrove Road—unfortunately. For this unhappy building-accident necessitated a double search. For the missing number. I never discovered it—the number. But I found a brass plate with the word “Rootham” engraved upon its much-rubbed surface. The uninitiated—like myself—would anticipate from this. That “number six” was now mine. But the uninitiated—like myself—would be mistaken. Enquiry brought out the fact that Mr. Rootham lived—next door. I did not discuss the seemingly strange why and wherefore of this. On the contrary. It gave me a turn. But I profited by the information. And turned again. With success. Dan Rootham lived next door to the house with the Rootham-inscribed brass plate. The true metal was here. Not there. Daniel Wilberforce Rootham is among the most imposing musical

men in Bristol. Using the word in its non-offensive sense, of course. He is neither short nor tall. Nor is he old or young. Stout or thin. But he is a man of will, a musician of

power, and a person of great intellectual capacity. He speaks with a Cambridge accent—and his hands. The latter peculiarity and a somewhat remarkable linguistic faculty. Make it hard to think him an Englishman. But he is. And has music in his blood. A more uncommon thing than corpuscles. He had a bass father—Daniel Rootham, Senior of Trinity College Choir, Cambridge. It was in the year 1837. On August the 15th. That Daniel Rootham—the son—not the father—was born. Was given the middle name of Wilberforce. No one knows why. Most likely to distinguish him from his father. Or because he would never be a slave to custom. When three years young remembers being set upon a stool to sing a song. Did so. Received sixpence. Did not to say whether as an encouraging or as a deterrent influence. His father taught him to play—the piano. Truant—he learnt himself. Does not remember the time when he did not play the piano. Unhappy memory. Unhappier instrument. Then went in, and for, the organ. The organ couldn't hit back. Then harmony. Ironical contradiction of terms. Then foreign languages. Speaks French, Italian, and German as a result. Rather better than most people. In the countries where those tongues are indigenous. Finds it a great convenience. For he is a teacher of singing. And can swear accommodatingly in any language. Without shocking the taught and the sworn-at.

In 1852 Dan Rootham—the father—died. An event looked upon by different people with different feelings. In Bristol. For Dan Rootham—the son—then removed to Bristol. Not because he wished to live in the odour of sanctity. Or the Avon. But because he had a brother. Who was a tenor in Bristol Cathedral. The new-comer was a baritone. Is yet. But with bass rumblings. And went the even tenor of his way. As lay clerk. Learnt singing. First in London. Under Signor F. Schira. Was asked to train the Cathedral boys. In the way they should chant. As he had done when at Cambridge. To assist Dr. Walmisley. Did. Has been choirmaster ever since. And glories in it. Drills the members twice weekly. Teaching their young ideas how to shoot. Out strong notes. And perfect pitch. Which they leave as they find it. And do not interfere with. For fear they get defiled.

There is the Bristol Festival. And there is Mr. Rootham. Who could imagine one without the other? And how much the former owes to the latter. I cannot tell. Nor will the latter's modesty permit him to admit. It was in 1878. That Mr. Rootham was appointed conductor. Of the Festival Choir. They perform triennially. And practise weekly. Ye Gods! There are 350 members. The Festival is the greatest musical event in Bristol. To it come Sir Charles Hallé. And his band. And the local amateurs. In their thousands—and mackintoshes. For the Cathedral is damp. And the enthusiasm causes a sweat not confined to the brow. Mr. Rootham has a way of his own. For testing the capacity to sing in a chorus. And in tune. He takes "He trusted in God." From the "Messiah." Not as a test of theological opinion. But as a singing lesson. The candidate stands or falls—in the examiner's estimation. According to the rendering of the part. Wistful moment. He has a golden-rule. For choir members. "*Never sing more than three bars without a glance at the conductor.*" And wake him up—if necessary.

It was in 1866. That Mr. Rootham became organist. And choirmaster. At St.

Peter's, Clifton Wood. Has lately given up this duty, with becoming resignation. He is only equalled as a choirmaster by his proficiency as a voice-trainer. The latter is his specialty. At so much an hour. Over six hundred would-be vocalists pass through his hands—and his house—every week. The frequent moments of leisure this practice allows him he devotes to teaching out. At schools. Nine of them. There is a sight-singing class at each school. Which, as will be easily seen, is a sight too much. He sometimes sleeps. Mr. Rootham has given up singing. *In propria personâ*. For a living. He now and then “charitably” obliges. And “he will appear again, ladies and gentlemen.” When a good cause calls him. He has a big compass. For his low D's are something to swear by. And he goes up to F occasionally. Has brought many good vocalists to the front. But he shows no side in consequence. His latest piece of work is Miss Clara Butt. Contralto. A lady of great parts. Literally. But original, for a successful singer. As she still remembers how much she owes. To her grand provincial master.

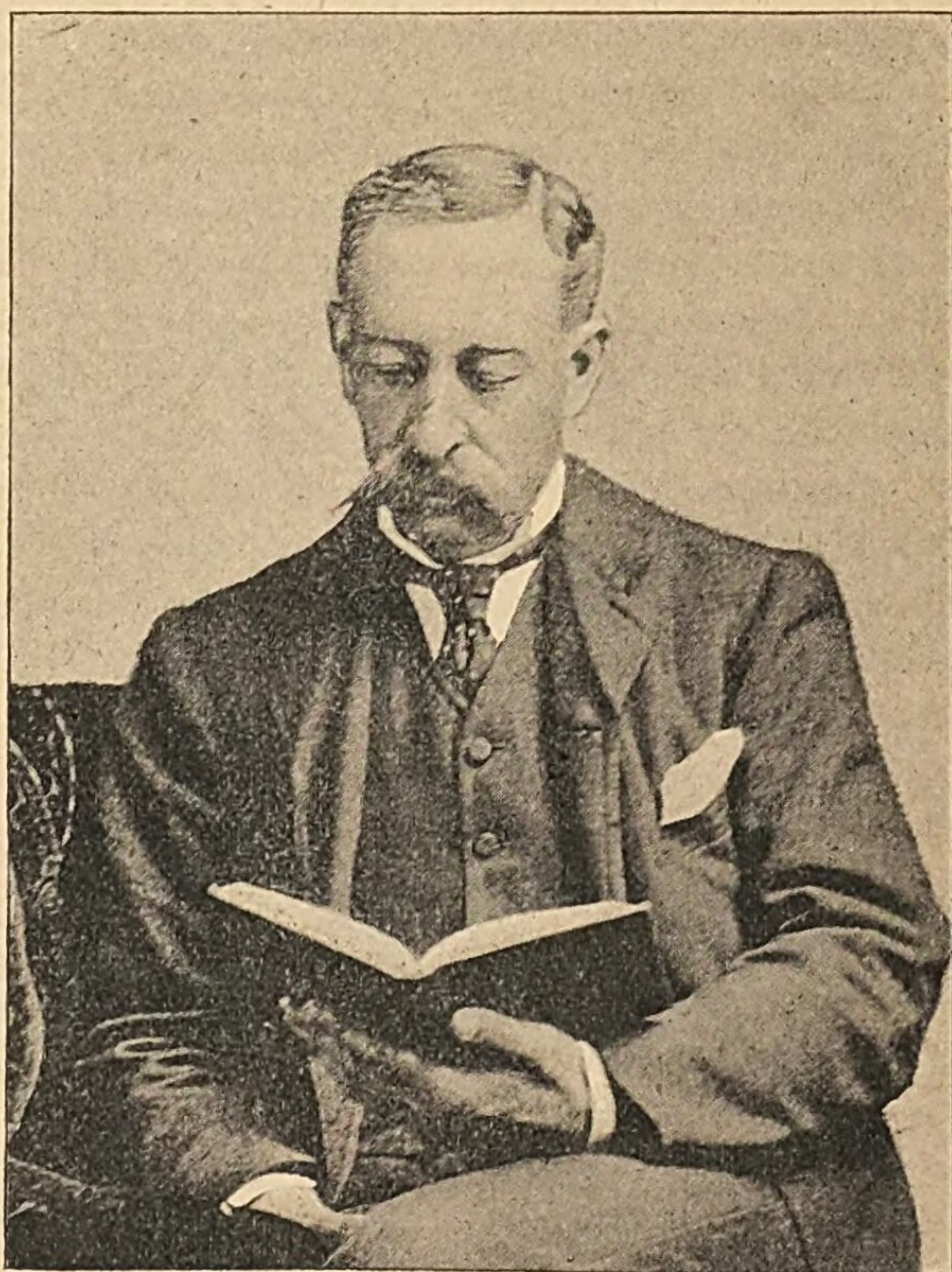
Mr. Rootham can play every instrument. But the lyre. He is no journalist. They said at Cambridge. “That if a thing had a hole at both ends, Dan Rootham could play a tune on it.” Is an abstainer. Yet frequently takes a bar's rest. Is married. But worse follows. It usually does. Has a family. A talented one. Daughter Jane Francis paints. On canvas. And on wood. Is a South Kensington prize winner. The drawing-room at number six, Ashgrove Road, speaks for her capacity as a painter. And her prodigality. And her capability. Daughter Mabel Margaret plays. Piano and violin. More than well. Won the first Bristol Scholarship at Royal College of Music. Son Cyril is only seventeen. But will grow out of this defect. And will be a great organist. Would be one now. But the “infant-prodigy” business is over-done. Percy Wilberforce sings. In a baritone. And in public. There is another Roothamite. But no matter. I found Mr. Rootham a versatile entertainer—and at home. About the most rapid talker in Bristol. And out of it. Yet his enunciation is unimpeachable. A born teacher of singing. For it is not enough to extend the larynx. It is also necessary that the words sung should be understood. This, no doubt, is news. To many public singers.

Mr. Rootham wears well—and a white hat. In the summer. Has one bad habit. He drops his H's. When pronouncing his own name.

EDWIN WISE COATHUPE.

IS—I say it without hesitation. The man best known to the Bristol Police. And, I advance still further. And care not what the consequence may be in the doing. Has an intimate acquaintance with the forces of law and order. In both London and Manchester. To most men these would not be deemed matters of pleasant announcement. They form Mr. Coathupe's credentials for office. As he is Chief Constable of Bristol. And a guardian angel—in blue—of the city and all contained therein. Like most successful men he was trained to walk. In another direction. But drifted into criminality, as it were. He was designed to take life. In an insidiously double sense. For he became a military surgeon. And ended—by giving “lifers.” The irony of fate. And the confusion of evil-doing. Alike demonstrated in the change.

Edwin Coathupe is a native of Somerset. Being born at Wraxall, in 1839. His father was a member of the Bristol Town Council. And died. He went to Darmstadt to be educated. And all he knows was made in Germany. He returned to Bristol. Was admitted into the Infirmary, by accident. As student. Studied for the medical profession. Both



*Yours faithfully
Edwin Coathupe*

there and at St. Bartholomew's, London. And obtained the Diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons. In 1859. So when he was induced to accept an appointment in

the Metropolitan Police. The former body were very much cut up. As a boy, had discovered that two straight lines could not make a circle. And that the trials of examinations were rendered easier by cribbing. Testifying to his early powers of detection. And proving that his inclinations lay more in the direction of the force. Than the reasoning of the medical lecturers. His father had intended him for the army. But man proposes. And, according to Mr. Coathupe. Woman accepts. For he is married. Though he has a passion for football. And an indulgence in two such dangerous games. Is more than Old England expects from the bravest of her sons.

Having lost his love for his old occupation. Edwin Coathupe was taken to Scotland Yard. And was claimed by the Detective Department thereof. Hitherto, this band of discoverers had numbered a dozen. And were dubbed "The Twelve Apostles." By their friends and admirers. The light-fingered brigade. Remained there for nearly four years. When his unfortunate proficiency at discovery. Must have interfered with the traditions of the Metropolitan Detective force. For he went back to surgery. And Tredegar. Where he remained till the Fenian outbreak in Manchester. Acted upon him like the bugle blast on the old war-horse. And he answered an advertisement for a deputy Chief-Constable. Which the Manchester Corporation were in want of. His success in obtaining the post was due in the Mayne. To the strong recommendation of the then Chief Commissioner. Of the Metropolitan Police. He remained in Manchester till March, 1876. Having amassed golden opinions, much experience. And a huge collection of Society's enemies. In the local gaols. And returned to Bristol, home, and Bridewell Street. To be run in. As Chief Constable. Where, and which, he has ever since been. He has tried to live up to his second name. And in politics—is a policeman.

Chief Constable Coathupe has military stiffness and moustache. Which, when combined with courtesy and tact. Are in keeping with his position. He is a man whose will. Is as inflexible as his won't. And he has proved himself to be a good organiser, a good chief. And a good fellow. He is exceedingly popular. For a chief constable. Who must of necessity make himself obnoxious. To many. The lot of the Bristol policeman has been made happier during his régime. And shorter. For he walks eight hours a day. But for seven days a week. The one blot on the police escutcheon. And which keeps—citizens. The pick of those who would be policemen. The chief thinks highly of his men. Who, he claims, are efficient. But too few. And are expected to throw cold water upon the machinations of the wicked. And the buildings that burn. So a Bristol policeman is not a policeman. When he is a fireman. Or when he is put out. As I have witnessed him on occasion. And then—well—he is only a man after all. Possessed of an unlimited variety of strong adjectives. And a nasty way of saying them.

My acquaintance with Mr. Coathupe is of voluntary acquisition. Which may be my good fortune. But I deem the explanation necessary. I consider him the right man for the place. Which is one of power. Though it has its compensating disadvantage. In the *fiat* of the Bench of magistrates. *Quod erat demonstrandum!*

DR. W. G. GRACE.

EIGHTEEN hundred and forty-eight was the year of Grace. For on July the 18th W. G. was born. At Downend, Gloucestershire. Four miles from Bristol. Both cricket and medicine flowed in his blood. For his father was a local doctor. And an untiring enthusiast of the "willow." Who founded a cricket club called "The Mangotsfield."

William Gilbert Grace is a Doctor by profession. And a cricketer from practice. He has done more for the game than any other man. Living or dead. And more at it. He first showed signs of coming greatness at school. As champion of marble players. And in the year 1857 played in three cricket matches. For West Gloucestershire. And obtained four runs in four innings. 1858 showed a distinct falling off. As he made no increase upon the 1857 total. And played in six innings. In 1859 his record was twelve runs for nine innings. He was twelve years old in 1860. And evidently not discouraged. For he plucked up heart of Grace. And played four innings for eighty-two runs. He played his first first-class match in 1864. With the weight of his sixteen years heavy upon him. For South Wales v. the Gentlemen of Sussex. And scored 170 in the first innings.

And fifty-six not out, in the second. And set the ball rolling which was not to stop. Until he had outshone every tradition. And broken every record. In the national game.



James King
W. G. Grace

In the year 1871 he out-graced himself. For he played thirty-five innings in first-class matches. And obtained 2,739 runs. And he stood out the greatest giant—physically and cricketily. The world has ever known. He was a terror to the “other side.” And his presence spelt demoralization. To one of the two elevens. His skill with the bat was not all. Though it would have sufficed. But at every department of the game. As bowler or field. He was irreproachable. Propositions of the handicapping order were freely made. In the interests of every other cricketer. For the narrowing of his bat. Or the widening of the stumps. That he should owe a couple of hundred or so before starting. That his shoe spikes should be turned inwards. That he should be declared l.b.w. whenever the umpire thought it advisable. That he should always be the eleventh player. And that he should not be allowed to play at all. Only these and nothing more. But they came to naught. As did many of the proposer’s scores. Against him.

He formed one of the eleven that went to Canada in 1871. And Australia in 1873. The year of his marriage. And other great feats. In 1876 he did some remarkable work. Once scoring 400 runs; twice over 300 runs; and five times over 100 runs. In individual innings. In 1877 was the recipient of a national testimonial. The inevitable clock. And a cheque for £1,458. He was as much a national feature. As the climate. But a good deal more reliable. The immensity of his pre-eminence is best exemplified. By the fact. That although two of his brothers were among the finest cricketers of the century. Their powers have been considered. But part and parcel of W. G.’s achievements. And have never obtained a tithe of the individual recognition. Deserved. Much to the annoyance of the innocent cause. For I, at any rate. Was emphatically given to understand. That there were three Graces. And not to forget it.

Dr. Grace has four children. Three boys and a girl. The latter being so much against her inclination. And is her father over again. In petticoats. Considers an indulgence in cricket the prerogative of her sex. One of his sons is in the Navy. A midddy in the flagship *Victoria*. His love for field games having run to water. W. G. devotes what time he can spare from the killing of bowlers. To the doctoring of frail humanity. And is a familiar figure in the Bristol streets. Where illness most does congregate. He is big, burly, bronzed, and bearded. The essence of good humour, geniality, and gentlemanliness. Has the club and accent of his county ever on his tongue. And bewails the sad fate which keeps Gloucestershire cricket. Poor in funds. And—*pro rata*. Low in the county scale. Having W. G. it has too long been considered. That L.S.D. and the professional talent they represented. Were no longer necessary. One man cannot win the county championship. And the sooner this truism is recognised by those responsible. The better it will be for the declining glories. Of the great West County Club. And the credit of local enthusiasts.

William Gilbert Grace is the most popular Bristolian. The world has ever seen. And is still in his prime. Long may his mighty hand keep the fielders at exercise. He is not only a good cricketer. He is a good man. A good husband. A good father. A good friend. And a good hand at whist.

GEORGE PEARSON.

IS a born humorist. So styles himself a member of the Conservative party. He is also the best known of Bristol's councillors. Of whom there are a multitude. And, old proverb notwithstanding. A paucity of wisdom. And his motto is—*Extension!* He is a real live man, dead on fossildom. And will never become an alderman. Until he is made one. Is the most active figure in municipal life. Metaphorically. For he favours a stoutness of girth. And broadness of view. Which are considered revolutionary by the Liberals. As to get round, is to revolve. And good business by the Conservatives. Who view the popularity he has gained for their party. With the gratitude of the French cynic. And support him in all things. But his measures municipal. He was a cricketer once. And his greatest pleasure still lies. In the making of Boundary hits. Not always off his own Bat. But off Mr. Barnett. His is a great work. For in the extension of the city's



Truly yours
Geo Pearson

boundaries. Lies its salvation. As all but an alderman could understand.

Mr. Pearson is a Bristolian by adoption. Hence, mayhap, his effervescing exertions.

For the greater greatness of the city. He was not born in the purple. But in the black country. About two miles from Dudley. And an eternity from a bit of blue sky. His family were in the iron way. Which may have had something to do with his ultimate evolution. Into a case-hardened lawyer. Mr. Pearson cannot account himself for his legal twist. I have put it down to pure cussedness. But his profession is the only unpleasant thing I know of him. A remark I intend to support at all costs. Mr. Pearson has pleaded youth. And I accept the plea. For he came to Bristol as far back as 1870. And commenced legal proceedings at once. With an office and a small boy. Who no doubt sowed the seeds of a future aldermanic state. On a salary of two shillings and sixpence per week. Mr. Pearson had the advantage of a previous existence. In the bustling Midlands. Where views upon things. Unlike the local preparation known as the atmosphere. Are fresh. And he began to blow breezily in his new settlement. And came to the front. For he kept his legal phraseology for his clients. And earned a reputation in public for soundness of ideas. And clearness in expressing them. He became a Guardian of the Poor in 1875. Chairman in 1886. And was elected to the Town Council in 1888. Having previously tasted the sweets of adversity. At the polls.

Mr. Pearson is a bold bad man of the reforming school. He holds that the museum is the best place for those institutions. Which are not of actual use. And advocates not only extended boundaries. But extended municipal powers. And maintains that the watering, the lighting, the tramming and bussing of the city. Should be done by the city. At present the city is done by them. He wants reform of the Poor Laws, as applied locally. Reform in the licensing. And a uniformity of administration within the whole municipal area. He wants to see railways round the quays. Docks worthy of the name at the mouth of the Avon. And a general uprooting of all the unholy and hoary interests. That make for supineness. And bar a general prosperity. And is—I believe I have mentioned. A Conservative.

In appearance Mr. Pearson is not a typical tradition-disturber. *But* is a cheery cherub in spectacles, and a high hat. And deliberation itself when he speaks. Which is often. As the newspaper reports of the Town Council meetings prove. He is married, and lives at Clifton. And in the hearts of most Bristolians. Though his manner of winning their good opinion was not easy. For it was through their heads. He has the habit of saying what he thinks. And can give a lawyer's reason for having contracted it. *It pays best.*

PART IV.

INDUSTRIES.

THE UNIVERSAL PROVIDER.

NOTHING is more extraordinary to the seeker after facts—and, for that matter, the historian also—than the testimony presented at every corner, of the position Bristol fills as a universal producer. I might aptly term it the “Whiteley of manufacturers.” For if you take great things with lesser ones, there is scarcely anything that is made that is not made in Bristol.

It possesses an extraordinary commercial omniscience in the immense variety of its “staple” trades. Unlike every other great producing centre, Bristol is independent of the “decline and fall”—temporary or final—of any one, or two, or three individual industries. It is rare that every species of manufacturing is at its lowest at one and the same time. So in its fortunate prodigality of resource, in its illimitability as a factor, in its immensity as a producer, the city seldom if ever experiences the prolonged periods of all-round industrial depression, which is too often the sad state of other and less discovered cities.

Bristol also compares favourably with other manufacturing cities in the position and general surroundings of its multitude of factories. There is in some parts the usual hazy assortment of mighty chimneys; but scarcely anything of their accompanying tumble-down brick buildings, of decay and filth, and evil smells and indescribable confusion,—of amazement in its apoplectic stage—which make one recognise what the commercial greatness of England means in practice. Surely a big price to pay for our inability to make goods as cheaply and as badly as the foreigner, this blotting out of nature, this erection of mighty temples of belching hideousness to the worship of the calf of gold! Bristol indirectly protests against the snugly complacent theory of the apologists,—that a centre of manufacture must of necessity be akin to the middle of Tophet. All of the many great firms I in turn visited “on inspection bent,” were able to show me handsome works, well-cared-for operatives, and decent conditions of labour.

Within the city’s busy boundaries there is turned out everything from tin-plates to Liberal Unionists. Agricultural instruments, alkali, boots and shoes, bottles, brass, brushes, carriages, china, clothes, confectionery, corrugated iron, corsets, cotton, engines, floorcloths, flour, hats, manure, paper-bags, pottery, soap, sugar, tanning, and wagons, have all many large and small temples devoted to their production. It has the largest cocoa and tobacco manufactory in the kingdom, and thousands of hands are employed in the manufacture of beer, which will take millions of throats and tongues to put down. I noticed with pardonable interest that during the month of December, the *duty* paid in the

port of Bristol on tobacco alone was £83,281. Which may account for the lot of smoke I saw hanging about the city and its environs on my arrival.

It was undoubtedly a serious thing for the many manufacturers of Bristol when the city was lost. In making the world the richer by its discovery, I present it also with detailed accounts of its twelve greatest industries. At the risk of making invidious comparisons I have chosen those individual firms whose prestige in their separate cycles of trade have given me occasion to believe, that an account of the methods they employed in conducting their manufactories would best represent the trades as a whole.

ON COCOA.

THE cocoa works of Messrs. Fry & Sons are too sweet for words : unless they be honied ones. And the visit I paid them will be long preserved by my memory, and my palate. It will be no fault of Messrs. Fry if my treatment of the subject is infinitely inferior to their's. And it will scarcely be my fault either. For truly, mortal mind never

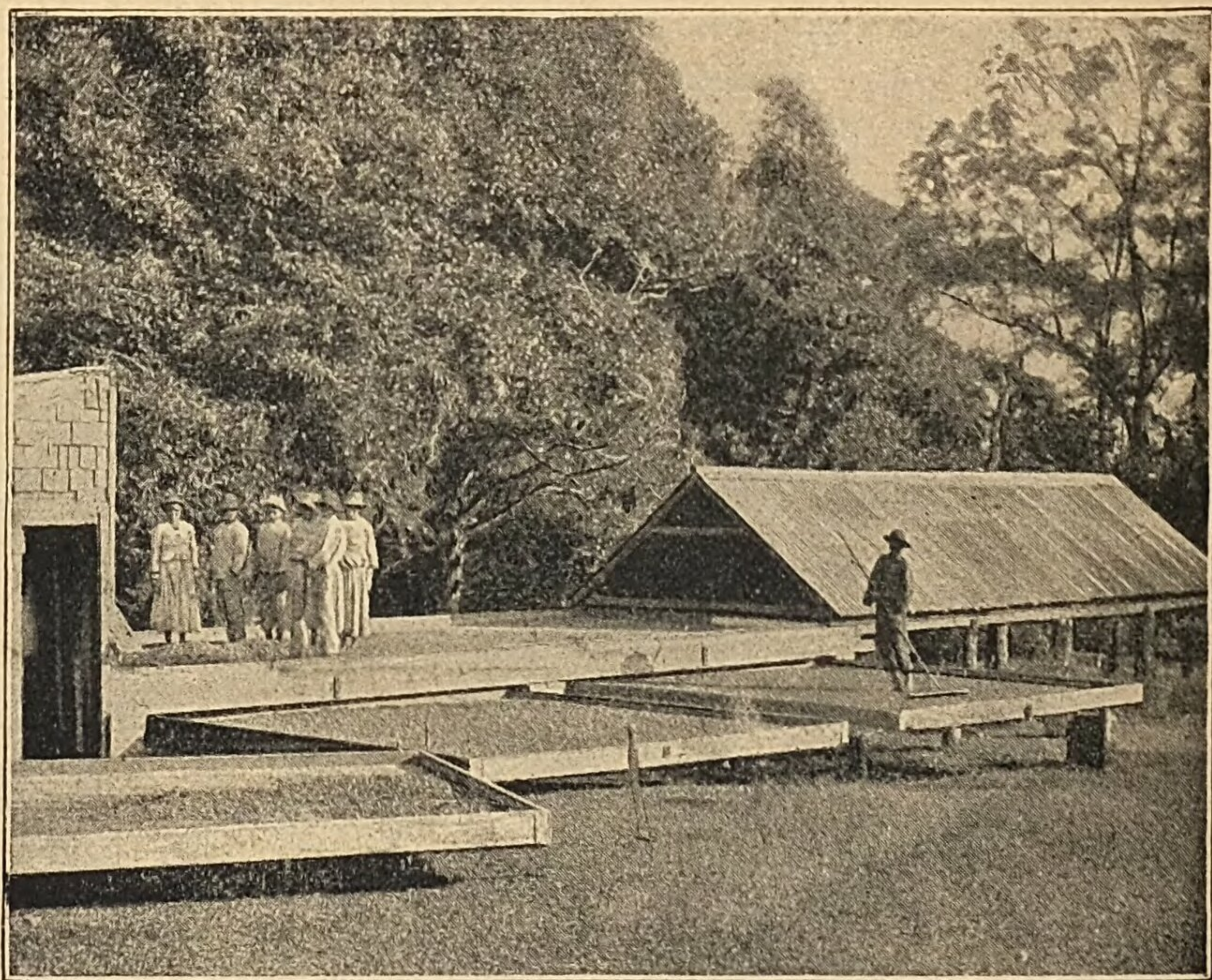


IN A COCOA-PLANTATION, CEYLON.

before grasped the details of such wonderful management and infinity of resource as signalises the operations of this firm.

It was more than the customary irony of fate that made Bristol, with its Cologne-like variety of rival smells, the home of so sweetly odorous an industry as chocolate making. But it is well for Bristol and its reputation that the stroller along its streets should be

assailed by contact with the delicious aroma, for which these works are responsible, which is both grateful and comforting to those who would otherwise form their smelling impressions of the old city by the associations of its river banks. I am quite in order in saying "Bristol streets," for this Oliver-Twist-like firm has something of a factory in nearly every business thoroughfare. Nothing has succeeded in staying its encroachments. All and everything has in turn paid the penalty of being in the path of this firm's never-ending extensions. It is not long since all Bristol was rendered aghast by the information, that this house—the house that in the eyes of every Bristolian can do no wrong—the house which has as its founders and present supporters the members of the most respected and widely esteemed family in the West country—it is not so long ago, I repeat, since all



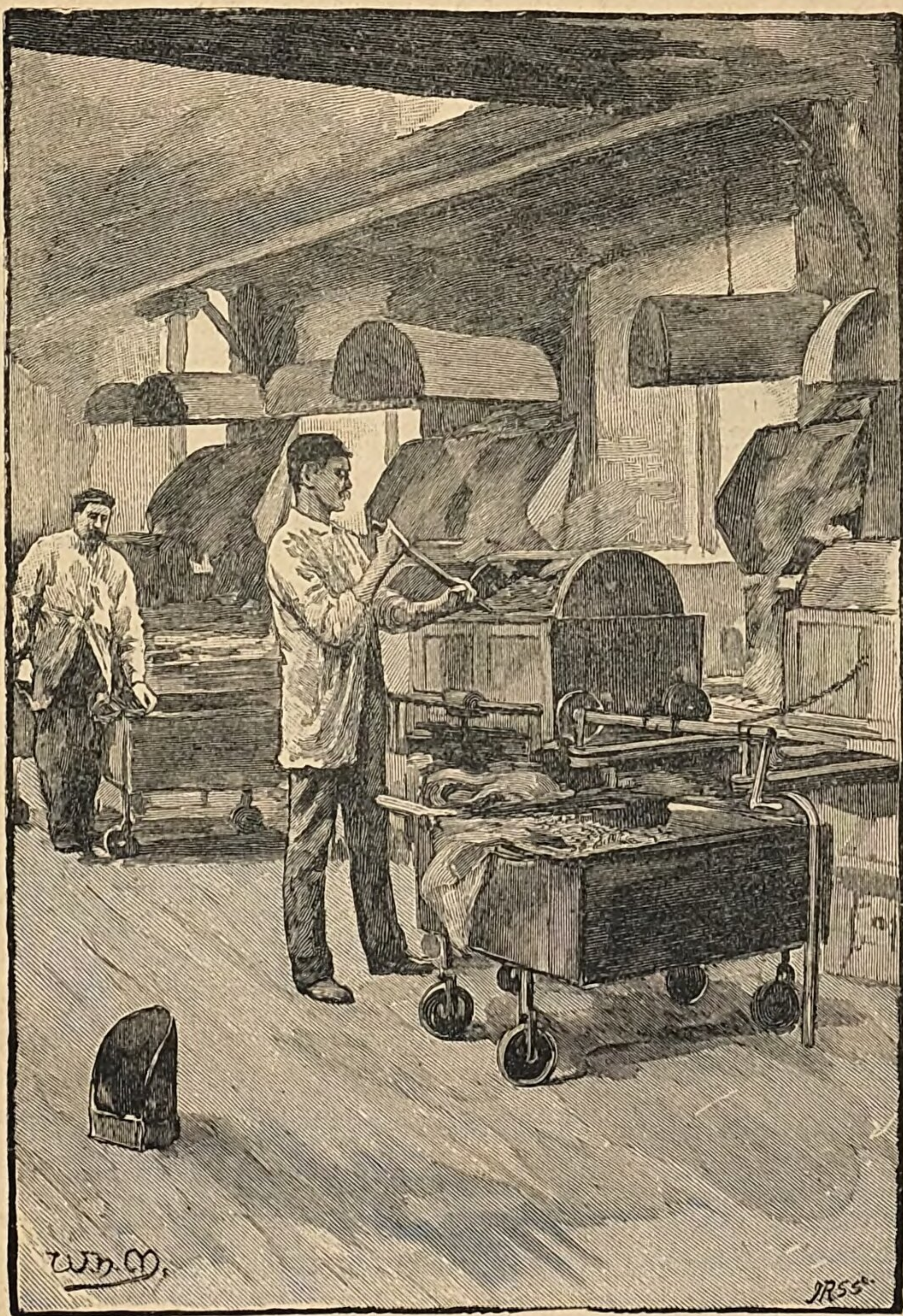
COCOA DRYING HOUSE, TRINIDAD.

Bristol learnt with a soon-to-be-ended horror, that "Messrs. Fry had just put between 200 and 300 of their work-people into the county gaol." In other words, what was once a repository for criminals, is now a depository for chocolate.

But that is not all of the sins under this head to which the firm must perforce plead guilty. A Baptist chapel, which is sandwiched between two of the mighty factories devoted to the worship of cocoa, still bears the respect-inducing inscription to the effect that it was erected in the year 1653. And now, "last scene of all," the famous old church of St. Bartholomew, with its quaint steeple and wealth of associations of a Bristol that was cocoa-less and sense-less, but incense-more—has been taken over by the firm for the uses of

the firm. Truly, I could compare the rise of the great Fry works to that of the tide. With this difference. The Frys never recede from a position once taken. "The flowing tide" is always "with" them; a simile, I hasten to add, totally devoid of any political significance.

And now, to commence at the beginning, I must start off with a description of quite the newest and latest things in factories, erected by this firm "who know not rest." This is, I

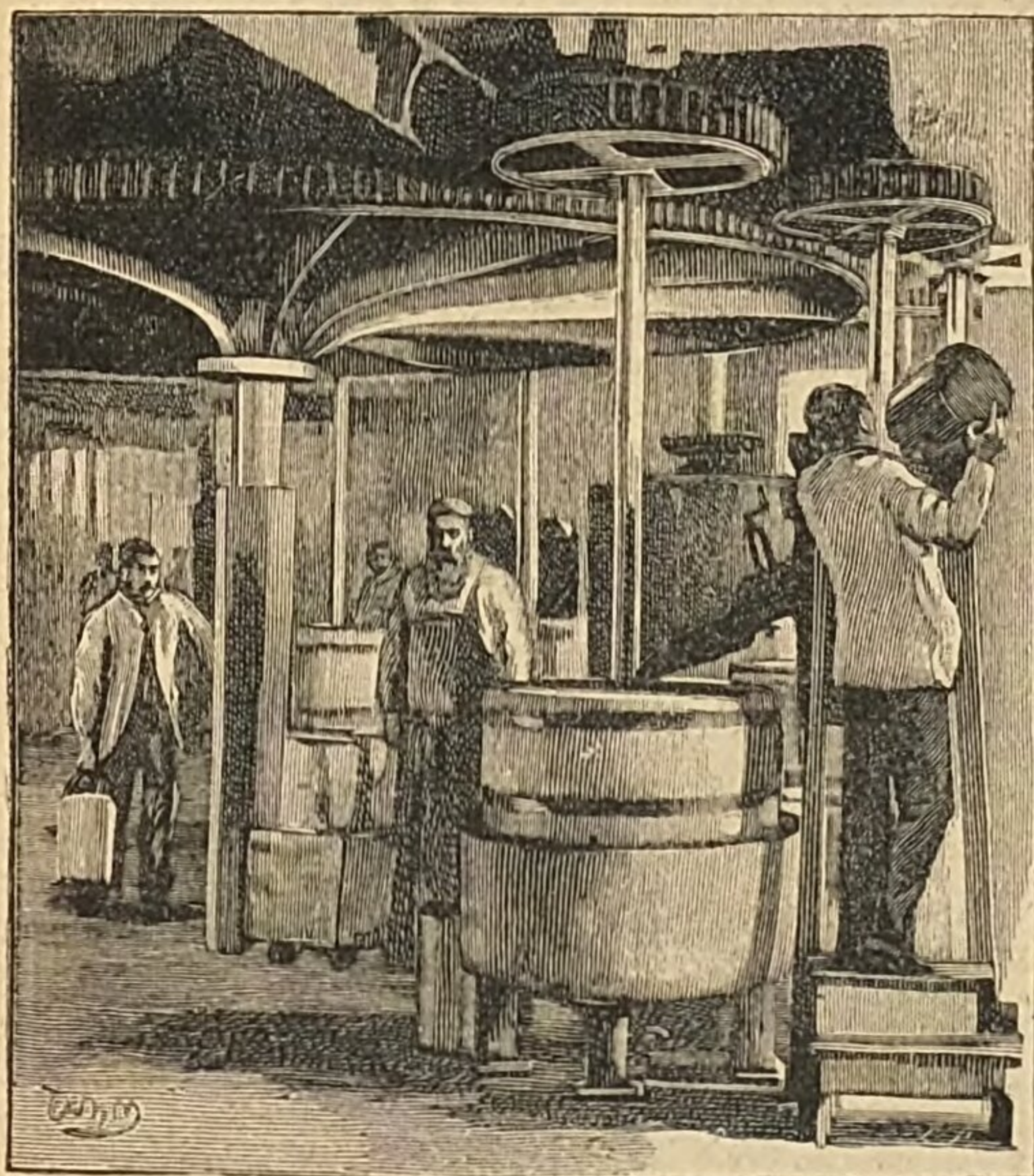


ROASTING THE COCOA.

should think, the handsomest commercial building in a city of stately warehouses and factories. It is six storeys high—and then there is the roof. There is nothing brick and mortary about this new factory. Good substantial Cornish granite, which is not unlike sandstone in appearance—not the red or sanguinary order made famous by Bret Harte—but of the common and grey order. And a very large order to, I should think, for some

hundreds of tons have been used on the building of this structure. When it is not Cornish granite it is iron girders and pillars, when again it is not concrete, as more than one celebrated Irishman might have put it, had he the writing of this account. With regard to the construction of this factory, I could not refrain from exclaiming as I climbed and descended my exploring way along—"It is magnificent, but it is not jerry-building!" And to a Londoner, so dramatic a change is sufficiently startling to pardon so ruthless a distortion of a famous declaration, which, I honestly believe, was invented by some similarly gifted and imaginative scribe.

I am not quite sure—for the most abstaining of mortals can be excused accuracy of description after the amazing maze of a look round "Fry's"—I think the first thing I did was to make a descent into the cellars of this building. I should recommend all buyers to make the acquaintance of these cellars. After the general sensation of scrupulous clean-



GRINDING CHOCOLATE.

liness everywhere had permitted me to take heed of details, I found that the subterranean apartment I was in measured some 112 feet long by 50 feet across. This gave, as near as I could calculate, some 5,000 superficial feet of flooring. The floor is composed of slate and the roof of concrete, which is filled into the iron girders, which are again interlaced with glazed white bricks. The walls are all of the glazed white brick order, and the general appearance of the interior is that of solidity, safety, and simplicity. I was so in love with this place that I suggested its suitability for municipal buildings. There were objections to this—insurmountable ones. At all events, I couldn't get over them, and I left this subterranean region in "high dungeon"

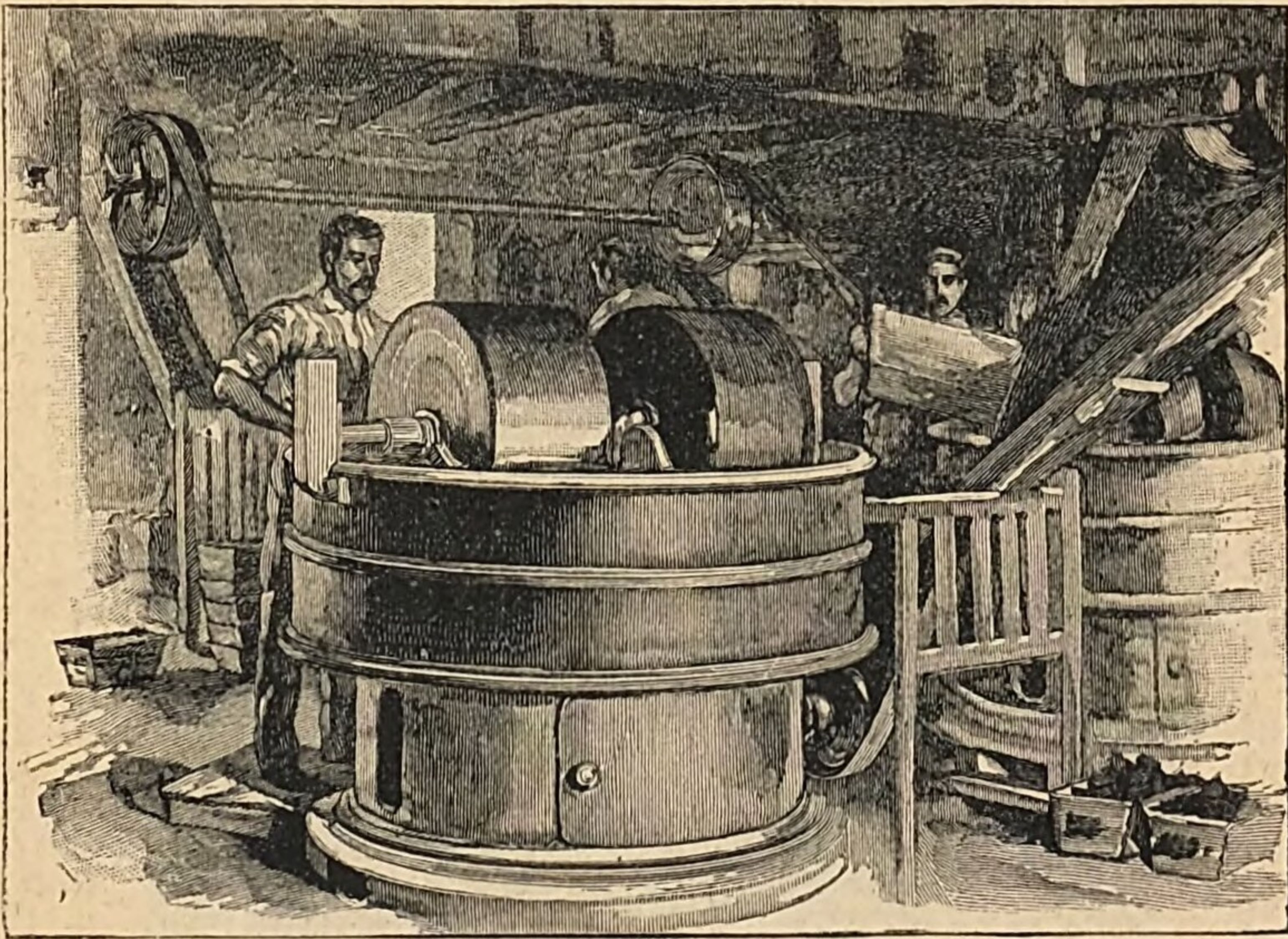
—as Mrs. Malaprop puts it—by the subway.

This subway brought me—that is, by going through the subway, I came into—No. 3 Factory. All Messrs. Fry's factories are numbered. At present there are no difficulties about this commendable method of designation. But there are limits to numeration. It doesn't appear to be so with the factory additions of this cocoa firm. So what will they do one of these fine days, I'm wondering! But sufficient for the day are the factories thereof, and I will continue my tale of these good works and their contents as I saw them.

Imagine, gentle reader if you can (as they say in novels), a substantial vision of thousands of tremendous sacks filled with the cocoa nib! These are stored in great warehouses, through which, being of strong physique and used to pedestrianism, I eventually passed. This is the material from which the different brands of Fry's cocoa and Fry's chocolates are made; for, though I shrink from upsetting popular illusions, I must explain

that the firm do not make these nibs on the premises. They are of foreign growth—though, I'm glad to say, not made in Germany, like some recently-invented poisons, which would be as deadly under any other name as that of cocoa-essence. It is an interesting and much misunderstood tree is the cocoa plant, which the reader must not confound with that of the cocoa-nut. The latter, as we all know, exists for the purpose of supplying the two-legged *gamin* of the forest with a substitute for the stone of his *confrère* of the town. No such use could be made of the cocoa nib, hence its ultimate inclusion in our list of eatables and drinkables.

Any well-regulated encyclopædia will tell you what the cocoa plant is like. And, unlike most names, cocoa has a meaning, and, for a name, is singularly appropriate. This is Greek I expect, to many of my readers, as, in fact, it ought to be. The plain English of it is "food for the gods," which goes to prove that the ancient Grecian amphitheatre



MIXING PANS.

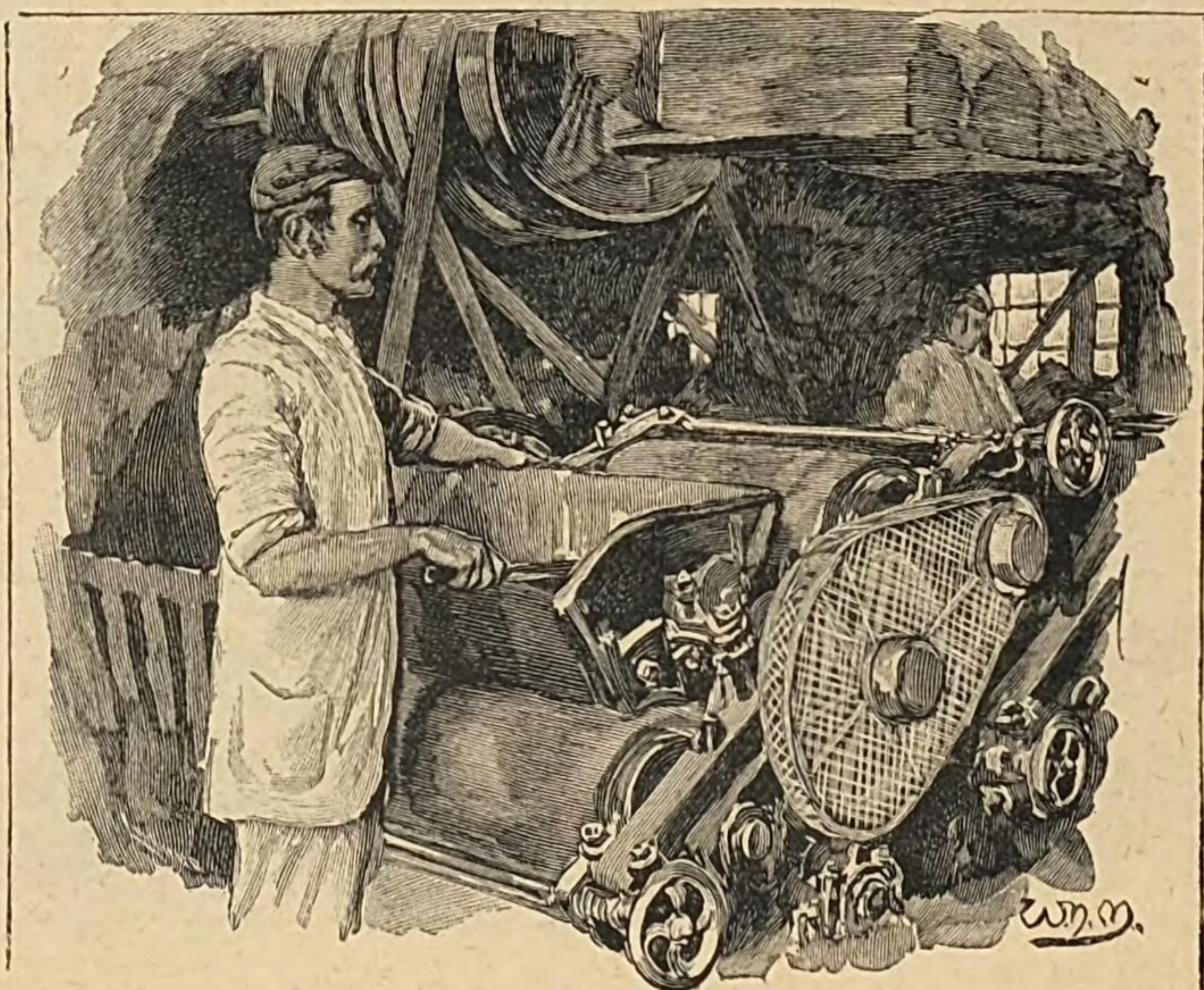
was not, as has long been popularly supposed, merely an open space, but must have had its gallery.

But I am getting off my cocoa-nut, as it were.

The different kinds of cocoa consist of, or are prepared from, the seeds of the cocoa tree. This most important plant is extensively grown in tropical America and the West Indies, and its cultivation has been introduced into some parts of Asia and Africa, and Ceylon is now responsible for a very choice growth. It is not a big tree as trees grow, averaging 16 to 20 feet, with occasional lapses into twice that height. Like children, there is little dependence upon the way they grow up. The fruit is of a cucumber, or longer-than-it-is-broad shape. But there is nothing green about the cocoa fruit. It is yellow when it is not red, and well red when it is not yellow. The seeds contained within it are numerous, and not unlike the ordinary almond. These seeds are really the cocoa beans of commerce.

When these nibs have been bruised so that they are reduced to small pieces, they are shelled, and then become cocoa-nibs.

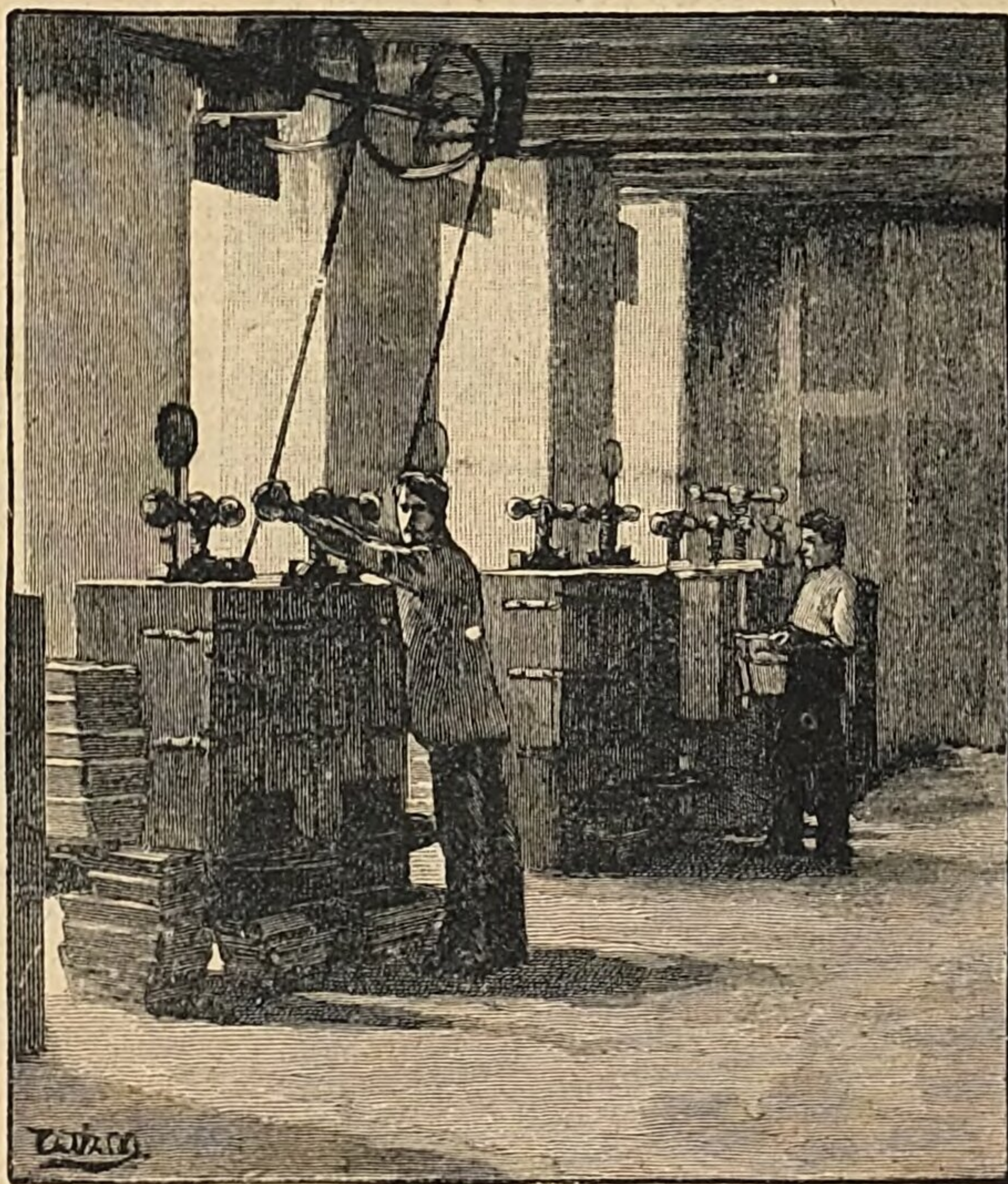
It is a striking commentary upon the advantage art has over nature, that the cocoa-tree produces larger seeds in a state of cultivation than in a state of nature, which in this instance does not stand for nudity. The tree attains its full vigour and greatest productiveness in seven or eight years, and it is generally responsible for at least two principal crops a year. When gathered, the fruit is subjected to five days' fermentation: to describe which I am unable to do more than suggest half-an-hour's close proximity to that part of the Avon which runs through Bristol city. The fruit is then opened by hand, and the seeds are dried by the sun or by fire, or they are buried for a while in the earth till the pulp becomes rotten. The latter method is said to produce the best cocoa. But you can pay your money and take your choice.



ROLLING CHOCOLATE.

Scores of tons of these seeds, or nibs, are stored in these warehouses. Eventually they find their way into the roasting room, where they are emptied into the roasting machines, which are large circular pans in a constant state of revolution, which is really a South American State. The revolving is done over a slow fire, and is, of course, the result of machine driven influence. I had intended speaking of the machinery in these factories in detail. I had formed such an intention on my visit to the first room. It looked a pleasing and diversified subject, and just then I was filled with an enthusiasm of my quest begot from an ignorance of what was to follow. But as I traversed room after room, and floor after floor, each supplying its enormous quota of wonderful mechanical appliances—each astounding in the methods by which it did its work—my heart and my will sank within me, and I am simply going to ask the reader to take Messrs. Fry's

miscellaneous machinery for what it is worth—some dozens of thousands of pounds. I think I am not guilty of exaggeration in stating that no better installation of cocoa-making mechanism exists. Ever since my visit I have been dreaming of cogs and circles and straps and bands when asleep, and performing imaginary gradations to the tune and the twist of whirling wheels, when awake. Nature never intended me for technical description. I can see, and I can admire, I can make a more or less feeble attempt at detailing the sensations I feel and admire; but to sit down in cold blood and write down in ordinary ink the particulars and the intricacies of machinery which speaks more to the giant intellect of man than anything on earth, is a task I am fortunate in knowing my incapacity to perform.

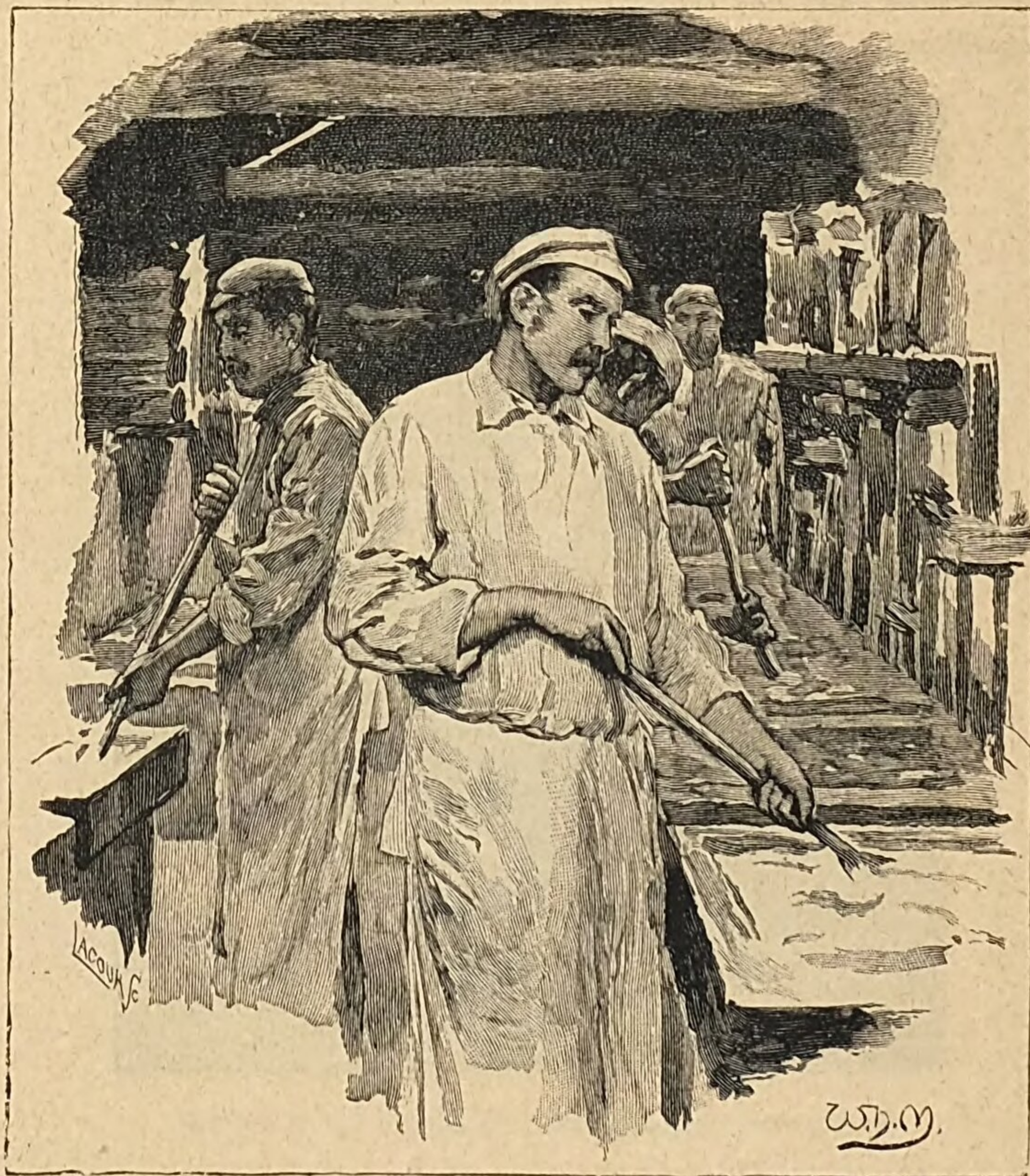


HYDRAULIC PRESSES FOR EXTRACTING COCOA-BUTTER.

All this time the beans have been roasting—metaphorically luckily—or a spoilt roast would have been the result. This would have meant giving the beans away, hence the saying “Giving them beans to-night.” A badly-roasted bean is a more fatal, though not so common an affair, as a badly-roasted joint. After the roasting, the beans are taken to huge hoppers, into which they are “shot” from the floor above. A stupendous nut-cracking machine, which throws into insignificance the powers of the policeman’s baton, then has its innings, and removes the outer shell; and the lot, shells and kernels together, are separated by mechanical “blowers”—machine-made hurricanes—which, by separating the husk from the nut, bring the cocoa-nib to light, ready for the next course.

This consists of “grinding.” In connection with this performance I must incidentally

mention that other constituent, without which no chocolate would be possible or palatable. Sugar has a lot to do with the success of Messrs. Fry's specialities, and the appearance of the room in which the sugar is ground reminded me forcibly of recent wintry landscape. There is a ghostly whiteness everywhere, and yet this room is one of the sweetest spots on earth. Tons of loaf-sugar are pounded and crushed and sifted until its texture resembles the finest of silky flour. This is then mixed with the ground cocoa-nibs—in the proportions the skilled workmen so thoroughly understand—the whole is then placed into great revolving pans and worked by unceasingly revolving granite rollers



STIRRING THE SUGAR-CREAM.

into paste. The large percentage of oil in every cocoa-nib is brought out of it by gentle heated argument. This has its uses, as we will see later on.

The whole mass has now the consistency, or rather perhaps the inconsistency, of dough. It is then drawn over a legion of rollers and granite cylinders, being flattened and rolled out by some beautiful machines, and makes its next appearance in a perfect chocolate stage. It then stops to cool, as I had best do. The subject is getting quite exciting.

Now, given the finished material, the process of making the different kinds of sweet-meats, and the varied blocks of plain chocolate used for drinking, is entered upon. Each

department has its own room, and its own hands. In one, you see great crowds of neatly-dressed and cheerful looking girls occupied in covering the different kinds of creams which lie in little moulds before them, with the brown chocolate. In another, which is called the "French" department, a number of experienced white-capped and aproned *chefs* are busily engaged in pouring into hundreds of little spaces the myriad compounds of gelatinous and sugar-cloying substances, which are so much easier and pleasanter to eat than to describe. In another room great piles of cream are undergoing a cooling process, after having received the attention of the different flavouring each kind



PUTTING COCOA INTO PACKETS.

deserves. Here the vanilla plant competes with orange, lemon, and other highly-flavoured essences: and the tastes of their great variety still linger pleasantly round my lips and form a delicious memory. Here and there and everywhere, cocoa in all its dry made-up-forms made me regret the careful surveillance I was under. There was "chocolate, chocolate everywhere, but not a drop to drink."

But more important than any other process is that devoted to the preparation of what is so universally known as FRY'S PURE CONCENTRATED COCOA. This is really the essence of all that is good, all that is best, all that is most nutritious in the cocoa, separated by extraordinary methods from its inferior constituents, and made to form in its compressed

sense, the purest and most perfect nutriment in a given small space brought together by the ingenuity of man.

The firm are convinced they have a great card to play in their "concentrated cocoa." Upon it, and its acceptance by the public, they are placing most of their energies. They look upon it as something which—containing as it does both food and drink of the most nourishing and pleasing character in the smallest possible compass—is a necessity which will take a prominent place in the food supply of the world. But there is no need for me to plunge along a path of eulogistic explanation of its great and lasting qualities, a path already trodden by the greatest analysts in the world: so I shall content myself with a bird's-eye description of its preparation.

The beans having been carefully picked—for only the finest qualities are used in the



PACKING CHOCOLATE.

preparation of the "concentrated"—they are distributed to the tender mercies of nearly fifty "roasters," where they are kept for two and a half hours to develop the beautiful aroma of the cocoa. The nuts are then crushed and winnowed, the husks being separated from the kernel, and are then passed through dressing machines. The nibs are then subjected to a scientific preparation, which was carefully undescribed, and is evidently not a "between-you-and-me" subject. It is then submitted to a series of grindings, the superfluous fat extracted, and is then reduced to a fine powder. To extract the fat, or cocoa butter, as it is called, the cocoa is subjected to hydraulic pressure in enormous presses. It is placed within canvas bags, then under these Brobdingnagian screws, and is "squashed" into a flat pancaky form until it is scarcely an eighth of the original size of the mould in which it enters the press. I took some of this "treated" cocoa

in my hand, and found it so dry, as to be absolutely devoid of the least suspicion of moisture. From what I could judge in the tasting, it had lost both heart and sweetness of disposition in the cruel treatment to which it had been subjected. The powder is then sifted through fine sieves, each containing nearly 3,000 holes to the square inch, and is then ready for tinning. FRY'S PURE CONCENTRATED COCOA is now in a finished form. It is the sort of thing one is not likely to leave unfinished.

This splendid "compressed food" is despatched to all parts of the world. Its tins have penetrated to the furthest ends of the earth. Quite recently there appeared in a number of *South Africa*, a detailed description of Matabeleland and Mashonaland. Speaking of preparations by the natives for a war dance, led by their king, whose name was Lo Bengula, the writer goes on to say:—

"Every morning and afternoon they were busily drilling, singing, and dancing, and the crowd in our enclosure became very dense. Soon after his return to Bulawayo, Lo Bengula sent us a fat cow as a present for meat, and on the following day his messenger appeared to request our presence at the dance of the older regiments, the Mahlahlenle, 'Pioneers.' The royal messenger was only a slave boy, but when on duty sent by the king, the second man in the kingdom. He then almost burst with importance, swaggering about in the most ludicrous manner. When proceeding to the Royal kraal he elbowed his way through the crowd, hitting right and left, and shouting 'The white men have not come to see you, but the king of kings; make way, you dogs!' He wore the usual dress with all his finery, the head adorned with the end of a box whereon was painted in large red letters, 'FRY'S COCOA.' He was very proud of this, and only donned it on special occasions, a boile of coloured feathers taking its place on other days."

But it does not require such instances to illustrate the globe-circling properties of Fry's cocoa. A visit to the packing room is sufficient. Here I saw a number of men at work filling boxes and tins with the succulent wares, and which were labelled as destined for, among other places, Melbourne, Cape Colony, Iquique, Buenos Ayres, Monte Video, San Francisco, Boston, Hong-Kong, Singapore, Zanzibar, Black Sea, and other ports with unspellable names in China and Japan. These boxes are all tin lined, for the firm's great export trade, and are made by them in every detail.

Which brings me to another interesting department of this varied concern. I was taken into a room where hundreds of girls—showing in their healthy forms and bright faces their acclimatisation with their labours—were at work filling tins and bags, packets and boxes, with the differently-shaped and differently-confectioned morsels of delight. Many of these boxes, as my readers are without doubt well aware, are quite works of art, and attractively form a suitable covering to their contents. The boxes are nearly all the product of Messrs. Fry, who have two large factories engaged in a constant race in supplying the demand. These works and their delicate and deft machinery are in themselves subject-matter for a long and interesting article. There is no space here for other than the chronicle of this further proof of the firm's versatility.

And now I wish to congratulate the Messrs. Fry, and through them the huge public who are their clients, on the perfect systematic order and the prejudice-removing cleanliness everywhere and about everything in their big factories. Nothing more perfect and nothing

more clean than the condition of machinery, rooms, and assistants, has been noticed anywhere by me. All the arrangements are good, and could not well be better. A perfect system of fire-prevention is in force throughout the buildings. The conscientious care of the ruling powers is visible in all this, and not only in this. The Frys—fathers and sons (the smaller fry, as it were)—are all heart and soul in the work of keeping together this little community of close on 3,000 souls, in order and good form. To be a worker at Fry's is, as all Bristol knows, a certificate of merit, a guarantee of respectability. These are things I have found out for myself, have testified to myself, speak out for myself. It can but add additional value to the excellent wares of a manufacturing firm, to know that they are the result of so perfect a system, and the production of quite a happy family party of contented workpeople.

And, after all I have said, I find with dismay that I have said so little. I have not mentioned the great engines which drive the myriad machinery, nor touched upon the water supply which in turn feeds them, and flows under their very doors in the shape of the river Frome. I should have mentioned the sick clubs, the lecture classes and the ambulance classes, the night schools, and the many other kindred and kindly institutions with which the firm supply their workers. I have said nothing about the Wapping factory, where there are steam saw mills and automatic nailing machines, and acres upon acres of ready-made boxes waiting their turn for fillment. But the writer, unlike his writings, is mortal, and the limits of space are elastic to a certain extent only: and my powers of description and the tax upon a memory which is not what it once was, are also reckonable qualities.

In conclusion, a few dry facts, which I have no doubt my readers thirst for. There are two partners, Joseph Storrs Fry, the present head of the firm and grandson of the founder, who established the business in the year 1728; the other partner is Francis James Fry, J.P., and they are assisted in the management by several younger members of the family.

The huge cocoa tree which has its roots at Bristol, spreads its branches into all the principal cities of the kingdom—I ought to say the empire—for the fine warehouses and offices belonging to Messrs. Fry at Sydney, N.S.W., are evidence, if evidence was wanted, of the remarkable ramifications of this great industrial concern.

The firm has gained sixty-five medals by their exhibits at various International Exhibitions in every part of the world. The first was obtained at the London Exhibition of 1851. Even those who are opposed to a policy of "meddling" can find nothing but praise for so extraordinary, so unique a record.

I said "good-bye" to Fry's cocoa works and all within them with a real regret; a regret at being what I am when kind fortune might have made me a manufacturer of chocolate—surely the sweetest existence on earth. To Mr. Conrad Fry, not only I, but those who have benefited in knowledge by this ramble through "Fry's," owe a special debt of gratitude. For his kindly interest in this account is above all responsible for any value it may possess.

ON TOBACCO.

RIGHT by Bristol Bridge, a long roadway which is quite wide for Bristol, reaches its hilly length along. The first part of it is designated Redcliff: the latter end—not the tail end—is called Bedminster. Apart from the sordidness inseparable from Bristol's business thoroughfares, this roadway is principally noticeable, both at its beginning and at its terminus, for the two Bristol factories of one of the most important tobacco firms in the world. From the very beginning Bristol has been associated with tobacco. It has always been a smoky sort of place; but its ancient shipping trade with the "continent across the seas" is mainly responsible for its synonymy with the leaf that cheers.

When tobacco was first introduced into Europe—a circumstance of which I shall have more to say anon—Bristol took upon itself the duty of preparing a plant inseparable from duty. And it still does so. Bristol supplies the world with tobacco, in cut, in roll, and in cake. But the credit is not wholly Bristol's. "Where there is a will there is a way." And in this way there is a Will: in fact, several Wills: strong, persevering, indomitable Wills, better known in the packet form of W. D. & H. O. Wills. And it is of these Wills, and of their wons, and of their willing and courteous assistance to my wants and wills, that, in the main, this contribution to the manufacturing history of Bristol will deal.



CASING.

As a non-smoker—which is a different thing from an anti-smoker—the writer is a singularly suitable person for an unprejudiced treatment of so consuming a topic as tobacco. I might adduce other causes which would tend to prove my fitness for the subject. But I am nothing, not even a historian, if I am not modest. So I refrain. Tobacco, moreover, is a much-misunderstood, a much under-rated, and yet, a much over-rated (in a Governmental sense) thing. Besides, people know little more about tobacco than the particular blend which suits their particular smoking taste. Popularly, it is believed to grow in the shape its cut, its rolled, or its caked form may have lent to it. This is wrong. I know it is wrong. I might not have been so positive of its incorrectness as a theory, if I had not spent two days in Messrs. Wills' factories seeing how pronounced was its fallacy. But that is neither here nor there. I can do more than utter a negative denial. I can prove that it is wrong. I will tell you what tobacco is, in the first place, and how it becomes what it is in the second place, which means Messrs. Wills' place.

Tobacco consists of several species of nicotina variously prepared for use as a narcotic. It can be smoked, it can be snuffed, it can be chewed, just as you choose. It appears that apart from his accidental discovery of a place that was not Asia, Columbus was responsible for the first European acquaintance with this plant, now equally the solace of king and street arab—especially the latter. As far back as 1492, a party sent out by my great namesake on his first expedition for the exploration of the Island of Cuba, brought back information to the effect that they had seen people eat fire. To lend credence to this extraordinary story, it is only fair to mention that this exploring party carried their own refreshments. There is no authentic record of the causes which led to the discovery of the uses of the tobacco-plant by the ancient Cubans. If, as some maintain, smoking is a bad habit, it may be assumed that it was not discovered, but like most bad habits, and “Topsy”—another American invention, by the way—*it just grewed*.

One of the queer things about nicotina is that that is not its real cognomen. By any other name it would smoke as sweetly, but it has never been tried. It came about in this way. Jean Nicot, who was the French ambassador to Portugal at the time of the first introduction of the newly discovered leaf to Europe in the year 1558, was the first to induce the reigning sovereign of the period to test its narcotic qualities. As a result, the name of the introducer was given to the leaf—which is a better reason in its way than those responsible for a great many names I wot of. As far as our own tight little island is concerned, the use of tobacco is due to the missionary efforts of Ralph Lane, the first Governor of Virginia, and Sir Francis Drake, in 1586; and after them—not the deluge, but Sir Walter Raleigh.

There is a pretty little new anecdote, which I don't think has yet had the benefit of publication, to the effect, that when tobacco smoking was very much in its infancy, an old and trusty retainer—there were old and trusty retainers in those days—in the service of Sir Walter, happened to find him one night enjoying his whiff. Filled with alarm at the sight of his chimney-imitating master, the old and trusted retainer emptied a pail of water over him, a proceeding which put Sir Walter out considerably—in two senses in fact. It's a pretty little story, and, as I said, all the better for being new.

The varieties, like the sources of supply of leaf tobacco, are very numerous. Tobacco

is, in fact, an extraordinary example of the laws of supply which follow those of demand; but, like wines, special qualities of tobacco belong to certain localities, outside of which they cannot be produced—except by the art of lying. These tobaccos are therefore natural monopolies, or monopolies naturally. Moreover, as in the case of wines, the crops vary in quality and flavour. Consequently, the produce of a certain plantation is of much greater value some years than others. Then, again, certain kinds of tobacco are more suitable for cigar making than others, just as others are more adapted for pipe-smoking than others. But more than any other cause, national habits determine the destination of tobacco. Heavy, strong, and full-flavoured brands are mostly in favour in the United Kingdom. On the Continent, again, lighter, brisker-burning tobaccos are sought after; while the materials used as smoking mixtures in the kalians of Persia and the East would, if used in England, have an appreciable bearing upon the over-population of this country. So, at least, the reader will surmise, if he lives through this report.

Not only do we owe our first acquaintance with tobacco to the Americas, but, they can thank their stars—and stripes—we still get our largest supplies from there. The principal tobacco regions in North America are Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, and Ohio. But the best tobacco for cigar-making is cultivated in the north-west portions of Cuba. The famous Latakia is produced in the province of Saida, in the north of Syria. So much for the promised information about a thing which everybody smokes and scarcely anyone understands. I am rather proud of my knowledge of this subject since my visit to Messrs. Wills: which reminds me that I have undertaken to describe my experiences of that visit. And who was the procrastinator who testified to there being no time like the present?

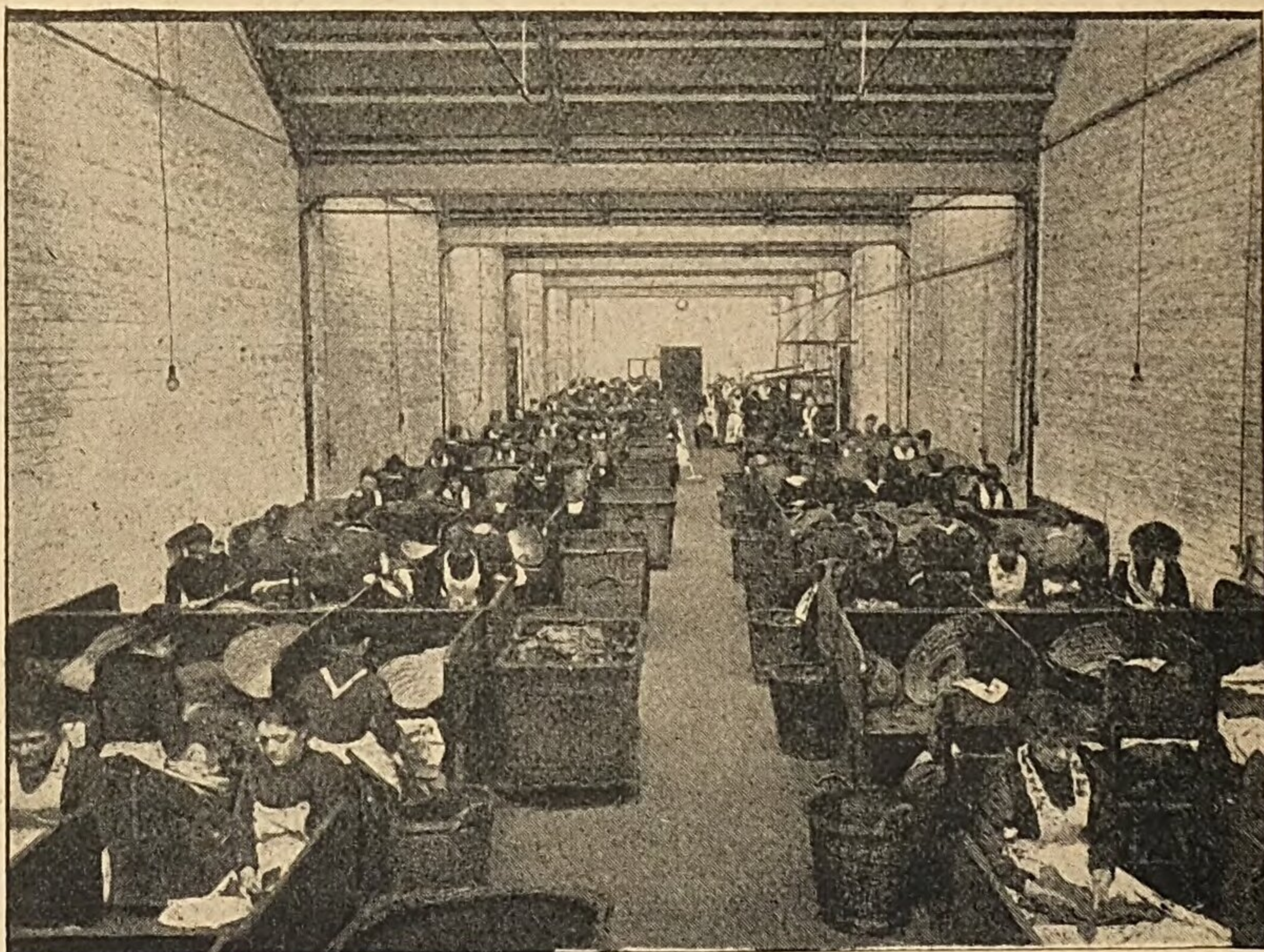
The firm itself is one of the oldest in existence—in this business. The exact date of the initiation of the concern is lost in the historic stores of a long-forgotten past. From the authorities I was permitted to study on the occasion of my visit, I am safe in assuming that for fully two centuries this firm of tobacco manufacturers has been associated with Bristol. In 1723—which is a period well within the recollection of the writer—the business was carried on in Mary-le-Port-street and Redcliff-street. About 1869, the present Redcliff-street premises were built. But the process of expansion was steadily proceeding, and 1886 saw the opening of the firm's newest factory at Bedminster (Bristol), perhaps the most complete, certainly the best designed manufactory of tobacco in the world.

There were two senses effected by my advent in the Bedminster factory. There was a sense of newness and spaciousness around. There was also a smell of tobacco—which is not, strange to say, a snuffy smell. On the first floor are the private rooms and various offices. I made the acquaintance first of the waiting room, a handsome apartment, whose walls were covered with certificates and diplomas awarded to the firm. Here also is the board-room. The walls of this beautiful room were covered by dozens of portraits in oils. My guides were, luckily, at hand with their explanations, and as these form in themselves a further history “in oils” of the firm, I will condense and relate.

When a servant of the firm has done his forty years of continuous service, the firm have his or her portrait preserved in oils, and hung in this gallery. A very pretty

notion, I may parenthetically remark. Prettier than some of the subjects of the paintings. I looked at some of the inscriptions upon these portraits, and read that the venerable looking gentleman whose oily presentiment I was then holding, was "John Willmott, fifty years servant to the tobacco and snuff concern in Mary-le-Port Street. Died March 29, 1801, aged 90 years." On another, I read that it purported to libel the facial attractiveness of "Edmund Burcher, forty-one years servant in Mary-le-Port Street. Died March 7, 1796. Aged 86 years." And then, and not till then, I felt how young I really was.

One wall of this room is occupied by three much larger portraits. The centre one is that of a benevolent looking gentleman, dressed in the tight-fitting habiliments of a past age, who founded the present firm. This is Mr. H. O. Wills, and the portraits on



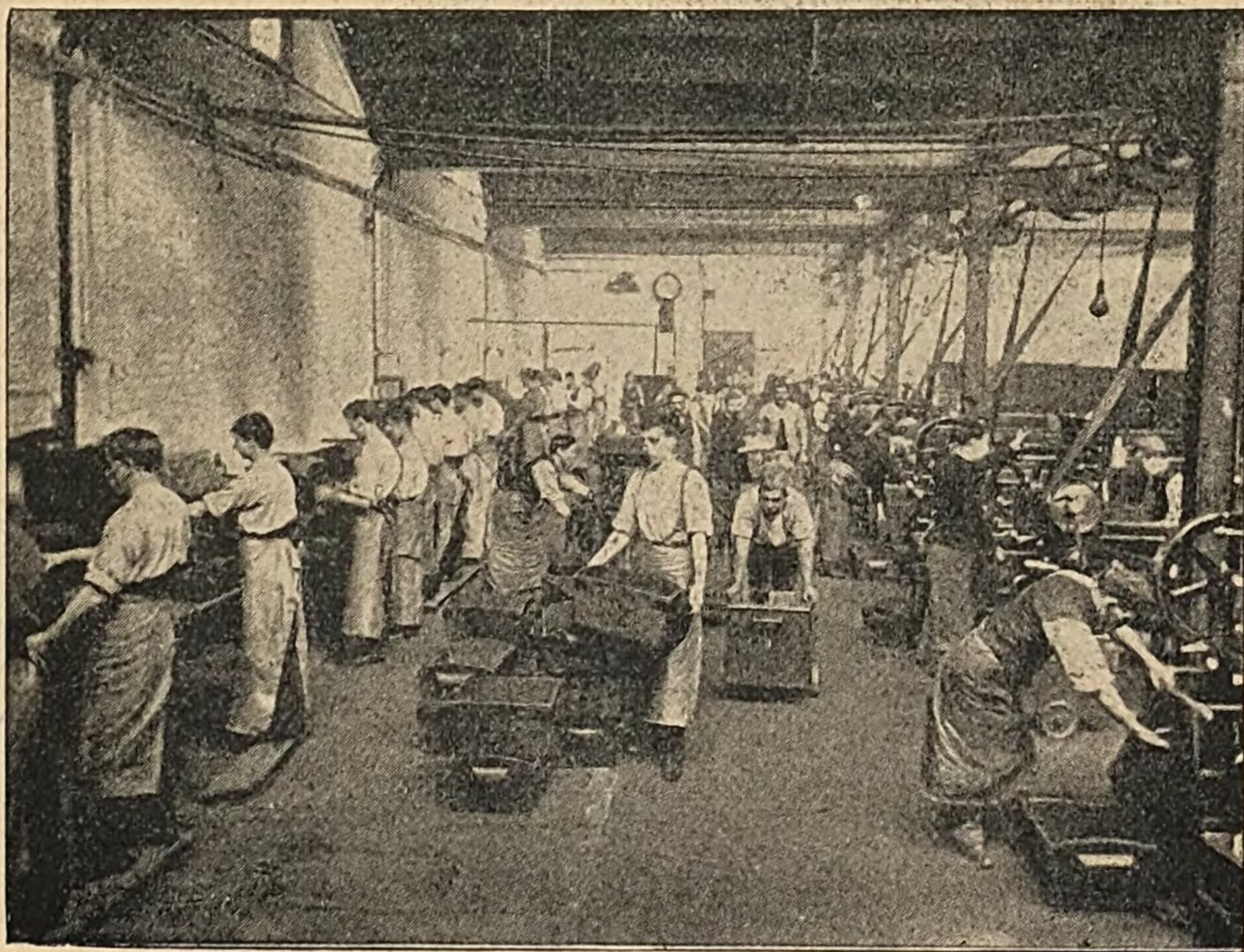
STRIPPING.

each side of him are those of his two sons—William Day Wills and H. O. Wills, the fathers of the senior members of the present firm. Another and more familiar face, looking down from another wall, is that of the present head of the firm, William Henry Wills, late M.P. for Coventry. With so many paintings around them, the troubled waters of board-meetings have the requisite supply of oil at their command for casting purposes.

On the way to the factory you traverse straight, cleanly passages, with glazed brick walls and concrete floors. These are hollow underneath, being utilized for the multitude of piping of all kinds used for the buildings' purposes. And then I entered the hogshead room of the factory.

Around me everywhere were mighty casks of tobacco leaf. These came from "furrin' parts" in the hogsheads, tierces, bales, and cases, and are delivered here. Then I was

taken into the "leaf-room." Here I saw the machinery which answers the purpose of supplying an artificial atmosphere. Tobacco is specially liable to weather changes, and, to put it mildly, England has a climate of a not too constant character. By the aid of these machines the air is rendered moist, hot, or cool, as the circumstances may demand. Lucky tobaccos! They have their weather to order, as it were. As we find it here, the tobacco leaf is compressed in form. It has to be literally torn asunder, leaf overlapping leaf as though one was an integral part of the other. It has been already cured and dried in its native land, and been pressed into these hogsheads. I had the different kinds of tobacco leaf in this room sampled out for my edification. I indistinctly remember having looked gravely at some "dark Virginia," and in a spirit of fair play gazed abstractedly upon some "bright Virginia." Then a panorama of competing growths called for notice;



CUTTING.

Turkish, Dubec, Java, Dutch, German, Greek, Japanese, Chinese, Latakia, &c. &c. I had explained to me the properties of every known brand of tobacco. From 3d. to 8s. a pound, less duty; all were represented here. I never saw so much tobacco in all my life. And this was but a pinch in the bowl, as it were, at the supply of the firm.

Then the sorting room. A very nice, light room, with great arc lamps suspended from its roof. On the floor a number of women were seated on low stools, busily "sorting" the tobacco, *i.e.*, separating the different colours and kinds into separate heaps.

Having been prepared, the tobacco is then "blended." Now in this operation, rests the great secret of the success of a brand. The ability shown by a firm in the blending of the different kinds of leaf, so as to produce the most satisfactory forms of certain desired results, is instrumental in deciding upon the position of that firm with the public.

From here it is taken into the "casing" room, where it is watered. Now, it must be understood that tobacco leaf arrives in this country in so dry a form, as to enlist the sympathy of the most ardent abstainers. A proper supply of water is administered, judicially controlled by Government, which renders it workable.

The next room is the "stripping-room." Here the stems or midribs are abstracted from the leaf. Except in the case of "Bird's-eye," and a few other brands in which the stalk is cut up with the leaf, and which accounts for its "bird's-eye" view, this process is always followed out in preparing the leaf. I saw enormous piles of these stems, which are practically waste. The Government allow the duty back upon these "returns," which proceeding, by the way, does not give its name to another brand of pipe tobacco.

The cutting-room becomes interesting. Here a large number of complicated guillotines



SPINNING.

are at work, being driven by a machinery which evidently knows no rest. The tobacco is put into the capacious holds of the machines, is pressed through in a block on to a block, and is then chopped up into the fineness of human hair—if fine-cut tobacco is being made—with an indescribable swiftness. It is then conveyed into a room filled with *stoves*, another name for large iron hot-plates. On these the cut tobacco is placed, and the moisture gradually roasted out of it. There is a general nicotiny aroma around these parts: but if the condition of the men as I saw them means anything, tobacco making is a singularly healthy occupation.

There is a grinding-room near here, in which some enormous grindstones are trying to fulfil the law of perpetual movement. On these big stony wheels the knives used by the machines for cutting the tobacco are ground. Figures speak better than words, so

I will add that 500 knives a day are sharpened here. "Knives to grind" is quite the fashionable call.

Then, on the most approved Turkish bath procedure, I entered the cooling room. Here the tobacco is brought from the stoves and spread on to trays, and allowed to cool. The next stage—"last scene of all"—is the store room, where it is made ready for distribution, in bulk or in packet form.

This is practically the process through which a cut tobacco goes ere it is piped by all hands. But there are two other important forms of tobacco-making, in which this particular firm excel with an exceeding excellence—roll tobacco and cake tobacco.

I went to see how the first of these kinds was made, and entered the spinning-room. Here the process of rope-making, familiar to everyone, takes place, with tobacco in place



PACKETING.

of hemp. This is an extensive department, and contains a large number of spinning machines, at which girls are hard at work supplying the bobbins with their store of material. The tobacco is of course spun to any thickness. I saw it coming out with no greater girth than is possessed by a respectable piece of string, and again witnessed it being produced on a truly Atlantic-cable scale of magnitude. The preparation it undergoes is the same, thick or thin. It is rolled up into balls by some ingenious machinery, the invention of the firm, and "there you are," as they say in the pantomimes. But what follows is the most crushing. The rolls, having been carefully "roped," to keep them in place and countenance, are taken into the "press room," which is a heavy-looking apartment, in which a number of massive hydraulic presses are situated. Here the rolls undergo pressure, which upsets both their convictions and appearance, and they emerge

from the operation, a few days after, firmer it may be, but of a certainty changed in colour. The making of Cavendish tobacco is carried on here also. The object here is a black one, and pressure and heat between them turn the original leaf into solid chunks, as hard as iron and as black as a new hat.

And that's how tobacco is made. Of course all this had an effect upon me. I moralised muchly on all I had seen. I contemplated sadly the instance all this afforded of the futility of all human hopes. All this enterprise, this mighty machinery, these hundreds of workers, these tons of produce—all these *to end in smoke!* Alas! It is but too true.



CIGAR MAKING.

The packing-room was my next venture. This defies description, so I shall not attempt any. Here the different tobaccos are packed up to order, and sent here and there and everywhere, all over the world.

I want to give special notice to a machine for *packetting tobacco* which is in use in several individual forms here. It is the invention of Mr. H. H. Wills and Mr. William Rose of Gainsborough. This machine makes tobacco up into half-ounce and one-ounce packets. It is wonderful, it is superlatively simple, but I cannot explain how it is done. Enough that the tobacco goes in at one end: as it passes through it is covered by the different

familiar papers we are accustomed to find round our packet tobacco, and comes out at the other in a few seconds, a perfectly and neatly wrapped and folded specimen of ingenuity. As a labour-saving appliance, the machine must be invaluable.

I was surprised to find how large an industry cigar-making was at these works. Apart from special brands, smokers of cigars get them at so many for a shilling, or so much a piece, or from their friends. The custom of stamping the names of the different English makers upon cigar-boxes is only now coming into anything like extensive practice. Some hundreds of hands are employed in this big room. The process is very simple. Enough tobacco is rolled up in the skilled hands of the girls to form the "bunch." This is covered with a "bunch wrapper," and then with *the* "wrapper," a piece of leaf tobacco, by a process which I might designate as beginning at the end and finishing at the



CIGARETTE PACKETING.

beginning, and after a little sticking together with the best gum-arabic, the penny smoke of the ambitious errand-boy, and the more expensive and less deadly fancy of the better-to-do smoker, is *un fait accompli*.

But after all it is, perhaps, as makers of cigarettes that Messrs. Wills deserve the most extravagant eulogies. They employ three different methods of manufacturing these. The most important is that in which machinery plays the biggest part. There are many cigarette machines here, all alike, and therefore equally wonderful. Messrs. Wills own the patents of these machines for Great Britain. There is, therefore, no need to explain the why and the wherefore of their unchallenged position as the only really extensive cigarette manufacturers in this country.

To return to our cigarette machine. To describe it is but to say that you put your

tobacco in at one end—much as a dog might be in a sausage machine—and it comes out a cigarette at the other end: much as a sausage would be the result in the other. It is all very wonderful, and with an attractive prettiness withal. I could scarcely tear myself away from these ingenious contrivances. Each of these machines is capable of turning out 250 cigarettes a minute, or about half a million per week.

There is still some demand for hand-made cigarettes. There is a room set apart for this purpose, in which Russians, who excel in this process, are employed. Then there is a further process in which both hands and machinery play their respective parts. But even so inexhaustible a subject must have its conclusion, and I refrain from endeavouring to exhaust it.

A beautiful little machine, which must get the notice it deserves, is that devoted to the



PACKING.

making of the paper packets in which cigarettes are sold to us—at least, to those of us who buy cigarettes. The machine is fed by a compassionate girl with papers, which are eagerly swallowed, folded, gummed, and dried by this voracious mechanism, and evolved in a perfectly finished packet-form in an indescribably short space of time. This machine also owes its creation to this firm of manufacturers, who were meant by nature to shine with a truly Edisonian light as engineers.

The export trade of the firm is a largely increasing one. What I have been describing has been the process of manufacture at the Bedminster Works. At the Redcliff-street factory, where, as far as the system in operation goes, everything is a replica of the methods employed at Bedminster—here, the whole output is devoted to the export and foreign trade of the firm. The *Wills* tobaccos go all over the world. I saw hundreds, yes,

thousands upon thousands of tins ready for shipment to China, and dozens of cases, ready packed and wire-sewn and sealed, for transmission to, without exaggeration, the four corners of the globe. In connection with this, I come to my explanation of one of the great hopes of the firm for the illimitable extension of their export trade.

In a conversation upon this subject with Mr. H. H. Wills—who is responsible for all that goes on and goes out at the Redcliff factory, much as his brother Mr. George A. Wills is at Bedminster—he told me that the great hindrance to a big export trade was the difficulty of keeping a perishable article like manufactured tobacco in good condition for long periods of time in ordinary packages in hot climates; and here again one of the firm's great advantages shows up strongly. As a result of a long endeavour on the part of the firm and the firm's tin-makers, there was evolved the most ingenious thing in air-tight—absolutely air-tight tins, that I ever could have dreamt possible in my most troublous moments. There is absolutely no way of getting at the contents of this tin, except by breaking it open; at least that is what you would think by looking at it. But there's the rub, or rather, the cutter. There is outside the top end of the tin, a cover. This cover takes off—uncovers as it were. Within this cover is concealed a little cutter. Now, supposing the purchaser of this tin of tobacco, actuated by motives for which I can have no respect,—supposing, I say, he wants to get at its contents. If he is wise he will neither swear nor invoke the aid of dynamite. He will simply turn the lid with the cutter round from right to left sharply, and the top part of the tin falls out, cut as cleanly out of the tin as if it had never formed an integral part of it. Then there is the tobacco, and of course a lid to cover the tin up with. The cutter is thrown in as it were. Its object is now attained. It can do no further good in this world.

As the intelligent reader will see at a glance, the great obstacle to the export tobacco business has been removed, as far as Messrs. Wills are concerned. In these tins, it makes as little difference to them or the tobacco or to the tins, whether the contents remain inside them for a short or a long period. Most of their export goods, cigarettes as well as tobacco, are enclosed in these wonderful tins. Lucky firm! Lucky smokers of Wills' brands in far-off lands! No wonder the export trade is rapidly increasing. Such a discovery as that tin should be a fortune to everyone connected with it. I hope I may not be forgotten when the sharing out comes round.

Every floor of these big factories is supplied with excellent lavatory accommodation. On the first floor there is the women's cloak room—an apartment, which when I visited it, was all aglow with about as varied an assortment of hats, and bonnets, and shawls, and umbrellas as ever a mere man was privileged to gaze upon. Every girl has her number and her peg, and, it is pleasant to learn, keeps her place.

Then I inspected the fire apparatus on each floor, and could not but feel a chivalrous pity for any misguided, foolish fire that had the temerity to break out here. It would simply not be in it. The hydrants (there are eleven of them) are the most efficient made, and they are kept in beautiful spic and span condition. Then I was taken into the dining-rooms, and then and there my heart went out to the heads of this most excellent of labour emporiums, which does more than expect the maximum of labour for the minimum of pay from its hands. But this dining-room deserves a notice to itself.

It is large, but not large enough. The new one in course of erection will be an improvement upon this, and will seat at one time 1,000 hungry ones. The cooking apparatus is of the modernest, and cost the firm some hundreds of pounds. The materials used in cooking are of the very best; and here are some items taken from the tariff which I print without comment.

Portion of hot meat, with two vegetables	...	...	4d.
" " only	...	...	2d.
Hot meat pie	...	...	2d.
Bacon, per slice	...	...	1d.
Soup, per basin	...	...	1d.
Tea, coffee or cocoa, 3 cups for	...	...	1d.
Aërated waters, per bottle	...	...	1d.
Plum cake, per lb.	...	...	4d.
Bread and butter, per slice	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Ever since, I have been trying to settle in my own mind as to whether the Messrs. Wills might not have shone even more as public caterers, than as tobacco manufacturers. N.B.—Railway-station refreshment-rooms, please note.

The firm has its own fire brigade and its own band. The latter, who number some thirty performers, do doughty work on occasion, and make a noise in the world. There is also a cricket-club and a football-club, which play matches on their own grounds, and pile up runs and score goals without end, to the glory of the most prominent of English tobacco firms. The firm has its own convalescent home at Clevedon, a seaside resort for the benefit and restoration to health of its ailing employés. This is under the charge of the firm's lady-matron, who also places her kind and motherly attention at the service of all Messrs. Wills' female workers. An excellent library of 1,000 volumes is also at the disposal of those who are reading and borrowing inclined. Then, again, an active competition with the Post Office Savings Bank has been instituted, and thrift is encouraged by the advantageous inducements of the W. D. & H. O. Wills' Savings Bank.

The firm also pursue an excellent method of evoking the interest of the workers in the quality of their work. To every male employé of eighteen years of age and upwards is given two ounces of tobacco per week, of any brand he chooses. To the old women of the firm, snuff is provided—which reminds me, with all the horror attendant upon a neglected duty, that I have said nothing, not a word, about the making of snuff.

Luckily, the tale is soon told. Snuff is tobacco leaf cut up, cured, and dried, which is ground and ground and ground into powder. I really don't know what is done with it afterwards. According to the firm, the demand for it is falling off, which in the face of the sight I saw in the snuff room, is a statement to be taken *cum grano* snuff. Ever since I left that room I have wished that I might have a cold in my head: which is not a thing to be sneezed at, as a rule.

The difference between the Bedminster and Redcliff works is not only that of size and position. The latter is *in bond*. Every window in the place is barred, and

the general aspect is one of gaol-dom. There are Government officials there who eye you suspiciously, and who have the power to seize and search you. There is always the danger of your endeavouring to surreptitiously depart from Redcliff factory with a few cwt. of *Three Castles* or a hogshead or two of *Wills' Bird's-eye*, on your person. I will never forget the sense of relief I experienced when I left the place unmolested and unsearched. It was as well, for I brushed quite a pound of snuff out of my clothes later on. What would have become of me if they had searched me Heaven and the Bristol magistrates alone know.

The travellers of Messrs. Wills have, some of them, to be globe-trotters in the most literal sense. Not so very long ago, a South American representative of the firm was on his way to the Argentine Republic, when he heard that there was a war in active operation in that unsatisfactory State. Knowing how seriously that sort of thing interfered with business, he altered his plans and made for Brazil—to find that the Brazilians had started a little war on their own account. He made all the haste he could—for his purpose was to take orders and not to act as a war correspondent—to Chili, which, on his arrival, immediately went to war with Peru—for some other cause it must in fairness be stated; and if it had not been for the kindness of the correspondent of the *Times*, he might have been there now. He had a very bad journey. Even representing so good a firm as Wills is powerless against certain contingencies.

Ere I say “Good-bye” to Messrs. Wills—whose works are righteous, well-managed, and prosperous works—I shall give the present composition of the house. The members of the firm are W. H. Wills, H. O. Wills, E. P. Wills, F. Wills (who manages the London factory on Holborn Viaduct), G. A. Wills (manager of the Bedminster factory), H. H. Wills (engineer of the firm, and manager of the Redcliff factory), and W. M. Wills, who superintends the accounts of the firm.

ON CLOTHES.

TO be clothed in one's right mind is not sufficient: though it sufficed for a short time in the earliest Genesisian period of man's history. In the beginning, everything was created but clothes. At no time before or since has so splendid an opening offered itself for an enterprising ready-made outfitter. It is related how my earliest progenitor led the way—or, as I might more appropriately term it, “sewed” the seeds of what was one day to become the enormous clothing industry of this country. After the fig leaf—the deluge of garments and fashions in apparel which a long-suffering tailor-and-milliner-bill-paying humanity has ever since endured.

The reasons given for wearing clothes are as many as they are inconclusive. A bold bad man of our own time of naked truths has pictured the condition of the unclothed aboriginal savage, glaring fiercely from under his fleece of hair which hung around him like a matted cloak. It is evident that in this barbarous time lay the barber's opportunity. But in what manner does our clothes-philosopher explain the inception of wearing apparel? In this fashion: “*Clothes too, which began in foolishest love of ornament, what have they not become! Increased security and pleasurable heat soon followed; but what of these? Shame, divine shame, as yet a stranger to the anthropophagous bosom, arose there mysteriously under clothes; a mystic grove-encircled shrine for the holy in man. Clothes gave us individuality, distinctions, social polity; Clothes have made men of us; they are threatening to make clothes-screens of us.*”

Now it is against this terrible travesty of the origin of clothes that I wish to oppose myself. That man—a term which is emphatically in this case intended to embrace woman—has done many things for the sake of ornament, I am prepared to give ready credence to. But I am more inclined to modestly assert that in my humble opinion a change in temperature had more to do with imbuing the doctrine of clothes into the mind of the aboriginal, than any mere love of display. It took many years of civilisation to make of man the completest slave to fashion. But it could not have taken very long to fill the naked and trembling savage with the belief that under certain recurring climatic conditions, having something else to wear than a contented smile, was a necessity which appealed with a several-degrees-below-freezing-point-intensity to a mind that did not care a fig-leaf for the dictates of custom.

I agree with my friend the clothes philosopher in his comparative admission that necessity had more to do with the origin of clothes than shame. In the earliest times man killed the beast of the field that he might fill his body with its flesh and clothe

it with its skin. It was not false modesty among the primitive Egyptians, for instance, that prompted them to wear the skins of other animals over their own. There is no earthly reason to suppose that they had any greater leaning to the mustardy qualities of the foot-bath than their descendants of to-day. So they wore clothes to keep out the cold, for nips of whisky were not of that time and period. One can cry shame on the modesty theory. The aboriginal man possessed as little of that spare virtue as any society lady of our own time. So having clothed with my authority the opinion that man was covered by stern necessity, I will discuss the evolution of the garments which we all wear, some of us with a sorrow too deep for words.

The subject of clothing is, unfortunately, considered to be a frivolous one; yet the question of clothing not only illustrates the caprice of the time, but is of the most interesting and instructive character: which accounts for the belief in its frivolity. Dress, more than anything else except malt intoxicants, represents the spirit of the age. In all times, the radical distinction between the clothing of men and women has been one of petticoats and pantaloons, which demonstrates the extreme conservatism of dress through the ages. Strange to say, this difference has a distinction. For in European countries, and countries which are not European except in fashion, it is the man who wears the breeches—with certain connubial exceptions. In Eastern lands, the trouser is on the other leg as it were, for it is the male clothed person who dons the petticoat, and *vice versa*. Man is not always an omnivorous breech-wearing biped. A traveller from the East once said that he was disgusted with European countries, where the men had not religion and the women no trousers. There is absolutely no accounting for the vagaries of custom. What is one country's food is another's poison: in nothing more than in the matter of dress.

I must brace myself to the task of tracing the missing links which connect our garments with those of other times. As I have said, clothing in cold countries must always have been a physical necessity. Society itself was founded upon clothes. The first garment was the apron. Of it, a much-quoted authority, Professor Teufelsdröckh says:—

"Aprons are defences; against injury to cleanliness, to safety, to modesty, sometimes to roguery. . . . How much has been concealed, how much has been defended in aprons!" Aprons were the first articles of clothing of which the world has any conception, and were the forerunners of all the garments that followed—not so much its demise, as its elongations and additions. The inhabitants of ancient Greece waxed eloquent upon the subject of good flowing costume. They never attempted to reconcile the two diametrically opposite principles of covering and displaying the form. They did not believe in cutting a fine figure, but fashioned the dress to fit the body. They did these things better in Greece.

The chief and indispensable article of attire for the woman was called the *chiton*. The wearers of this literally got the sack, for it consisted of one piece of cloth sewn together at the sides, but open at the top and bottom, and reaching from the neck to the feet. The male dress was a *himation* like that just described, but worn differently. From the primitive simplicity of this dress one can see in what an awkward position

Blepyrus was placed when his wife carried off his *himation* and shoes. At times like those, the disadvantage of living in an age of clothes must have been forcibly borne to the minds of the clotheless.

Among the Romans, the prevalent form of dress for the male was the toga. Like the conversation of the period, the toga was broader than it was long. Being enveloped in the folds of the toga was a thing one could not easily get out of. The Roman ladies did not dress much differently from those of Greece. It was a time of long flowing garments, and the day of the Women's Rational Dress Movement was not yet.

Previous to the year 1600 B.C., the ordinary male dress of the Egyptian consisted of a piece of linen cloth tied round the loins. On full dress occasions, the skin of a tiger was utilised and thrown over the shoulders. The latter was an expensive piece of clothing—was, in fact, a costume of great Worth, for its possession unfortunately necessitated the catching of the tiger. It was left for a future and more civilised age to dispense with the necessity of an ownership in more than name between the skin and the animal it was supposed to have once sheltered.

Until some year after the close of the 15th century, defensive armour occupied the most important position among the articles of costume worn by men of the higher classes. The advantages of getting inside of huge, unwieldy, iron-plated covering not only consisted in rendering the wearer water-proof and sword-proof, but prevented him doing the damage he might have done had his movements been less impeded by the fortifications he carried, and his thoughts less concentrated upon the solution of the problem of his rising, should he fall. Up to this time the tailor played but little part in the active life of the nation. It was the day of the iron merchant and the blacksmith.

Now it is interesting from an ethical standpoint to remember that in all countries, among civilised races, in the degree that climate is more temperate, in that same degree is the style of dress more liable to changes and fluctuations, and more completely under the sway of fashion. In regions that are very hot or very cold, fashion, however quaint and eccentric, is long-lived. The costume of one generation for the most part is reflected in its successor. One gathers from this that England is not a land of extreme climatic conditions. Some of us may open our eyes at this, and wonder with a great wondering. Experience may teach us differently. So much the worse for experience.

To our departed relatives the Anglo-Saxons, we owe much in the way of sensible clothing. Their dress was simple in character, and designedly adapted to the tastes and sentiments and the usages and requirements of a hardy and temperate race. The prevailing costume consisted of a sleeved tunic open at the sides and bound round the waist by a girdle. A short cloak was worn over this tunic by the young and giddy, the older and wiser members of the community affected a longer and ampler garment. The girdle played a great and important part in the costume of the period. It was sported by both sexes, and was a species of swathing band in an age that knew not tight corsets and loose waistcoats.

The pre-trouseric period might be termed that of the mantle, which, in its most primitive form, was a genuine ready-made garment of Nature's own fashioning. This

cloak marked the era of the trade in ready-mades. Then the transition stage to the trouser *régime*. No doubt those tribes whose nomadic dispositions took them over much ground, found the flowing tunic impede easy pedestrianism. To obtain a practical acquiescence with this theory, all the male reader has to do is to don petticoats, and endeavour to beat the last championship record. So the idea of the divided skirt was first evolved out of the inner consciousness and outer comfort of our semi-savage ancestors, and is not so modern a craze as certain leaders of Rational Dress Associations would have us believe. A separate sheath to a separate leg was a natural solution, and has kept millions of men in breeched-bondage ever since. It is true that in certain mountain fastnesses the advance of the all-conquering trouser is still being successfully resisted, and many much-be-kilted Highlanders dispute its sway and bid it a half-naked defiance. And thus I have sketched the evolution from the fig leaf garment to the "50s. as advertised" of this present year of grace.

All men do reverence to clothes. Are not all their earthly interests (according to the best authority) hooked and buttoned together and held up by clothes? And yet how few wearers of these climatic and police-regulationed necessities bestow any attention on so important a matter as their inception, their evolution, and their present mode of manufacture? Of this latter I shall have much to say later on. I have myself never given as much attention to the subject, either in thought or practice, as recent researches have demonstrated it to be worth. Few things under heaven are more interesting, either as a study or as a business, and, I doubt not, more profitable. As my friend, the Professor whom I have already introduced to the readers of this report, puts it: "*In this one pregnant subject of clothes, rightly understood, is included all that men have thought, dreamed, done, and been; the whole eternal universe and what it holds is but clothing; and the essence of all science lies in the philosophy of clothes.*"

This many trade-headed Hydra of Bristol has long been a great centre of the clothing trade. In nothing more than in this industry does the philanthropic character of the Western capital show up strongest. To feed the hungry is not a more meritorious thing than to clothe the naked: and without doubt it is the more decent of the two virtues. It were better to be hungry than to be unclothed, as any Mrs. Grundy will tell you. So in providing us with clothes, Bristol deserves all the modest notice I hope my writings will bring it. There are many mighty temples devoted to the worship of the gospel of *Sartor Resartus* in Bristol. But the greatest of all these, the one whose history and present position is most pregnant with every conceivable advantage to be gathered from a discussion of the subject, is the one which forms the groundwork of my description, the firm of Wathen, Gardiner, & Co.

The West of England has always, within our industrial ken, been a centre of the clothing trade. The land to which the reputation of "West of England broadcloths" has not penetrated, must share with the country of the North Pole the distinction of being undiscovered and un-Columbused. As was natural, Bristol, as the metropolis of the West, took the leading part in the staple trade of the surrounding district. Temple parish, where the local philanthropist Edward Colston was born, was in olden times the great heart of the cloth trade, at whose beatings merchants from all parts of the country attended to purchase

or to barter—surely an invidious distinction. The craftsmen had their Weaver's hall and chapel there, the latter still forming the north side of the chancel of the parish church; and on the ancient tombstones have been found shuttles and other weavers' emblems. The great cloth mart has long since disappeared into the abyss of departed customs. What has survived, is in fact living a healthier life, and bearing a greater reputation than at any past period of its history, is the West of England cloth. Cloth factories abound in the surrounding counties, and Bristol has tightened its ancient hold upon the manipulation of their products into manufactured wares. It is both the cradle and the parent of our British clothing industry, one of the most important and globe-wide distributing branches of commerce in the world.

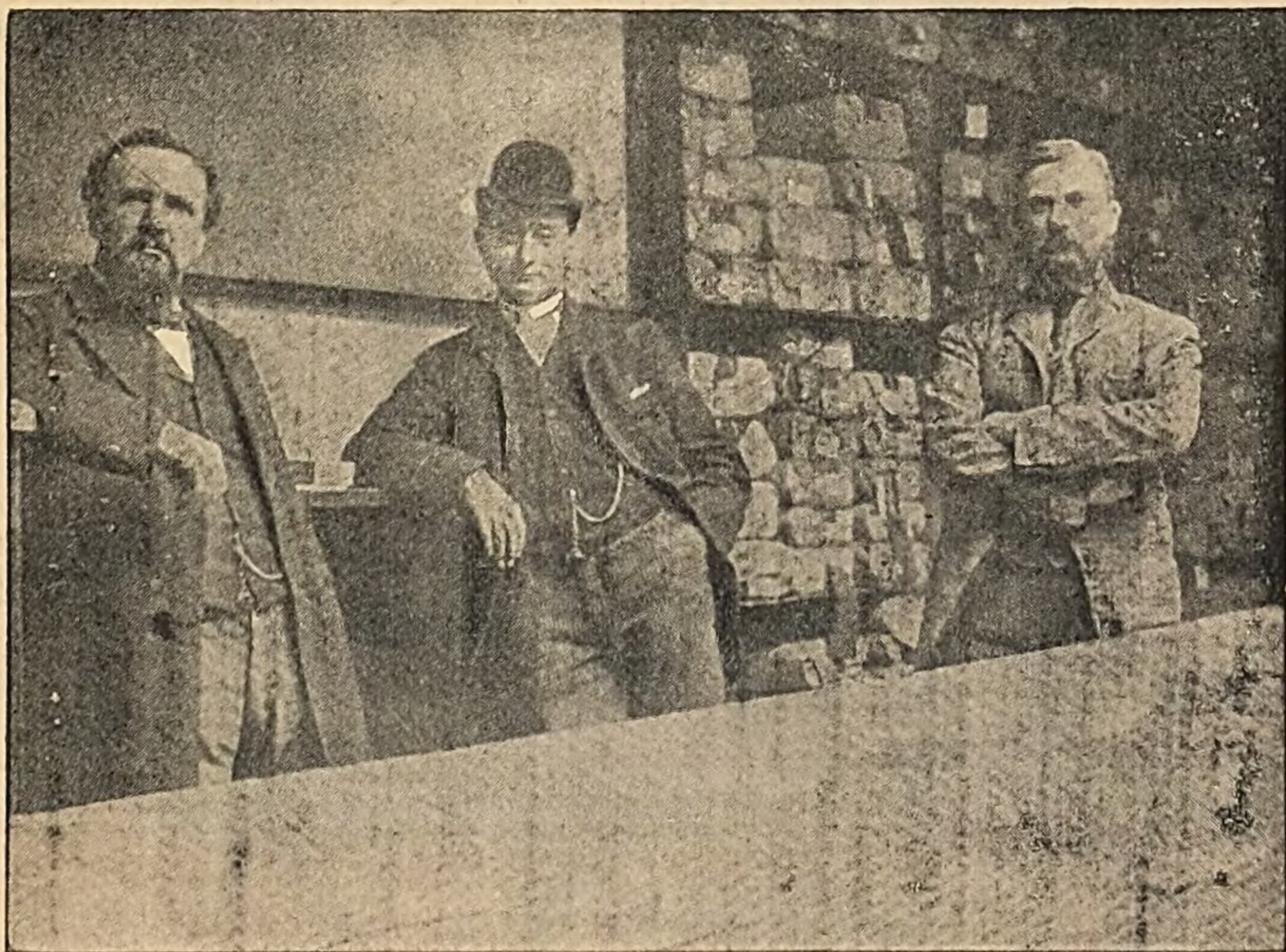
In the year 1801, the High Sheriff of Bristol, Mr. John Gardiner, carried on the business of retail clothier in Union Street. It is curious that the trade in ready-made garments at that period was largely devoted to the production of women's clothes, and it was in this that Mr. John Gardiner dealt principally. He eventually removed his business to Bridge Street, and it was there that his foresight first conceived a profitable market for English ready-made clothing in the West Indies. The negro of that country was beginning to be ashamed of his natural condition, and to feel the effect of some appreciable cooling in his relations to the Gulf Stream. He approved of the blue Penistone naps and canvas shirts sent out to him by Mr. Gardiner, and the first step in the formation of the leading export clothing firm in the world was taken. Mr. John Gardiner was succeeded by his son, Mr. Henry Gardiner, who removed the business to Maryleport churchyard, thus obtaining graver surroundings. The trade with the West Indies had reached considerable proportions when another removal was made to the present premises in Broad Street. The clothes were sent out packed in puncheons, which were returned filled with the famous Jamaica intoxicant. A rum proceeding, truly. If we supplied them with sober garments, they in return stipulated to have a share in making us drunk. Another instance of the strange workings of the law of compensations. The negro was eventually emancipated, in more ways than one, and a more European class of garment was demanded, supplied, and worn out there.

In 1854 the export trade with Australasia began; 1856 found the firm energetically catering for the home trade, which was given up in 1858 owing to the enormous trade with the colonies taxing the producing powers of the concern to its utmost. Mr. Henry Gardiner's brothers, James and Charles, were at this time associated with him in the business. In 1862 Mr., afterwards Sir Charles Wathen, entered the firm. Things then began to hum, and the great possibilities of the clothing trade with far-off lands necessitated an increase in the number of skilled workers for the purpose. For this object, the firm started a branch factory at Winterbourne, some six miles from Bristol, and trained the inhabitants of the surrounding districts in the way they should go along the path of tailoring. This proved so successful that the movement was extended to the adjacent villages, at Mangotsfield, Frampton-Cottrell, Wadleys End, and Coalpit Heath. Thus a new employment, offering to the underpaid agriculturist and his family a reward for their labour far beyond precedent, was initiated, and the whole district rallied to the new industry. Many hundreds of persons are at the present time engaged as outside hands,

being quite as much in the employ of the firm as though they formed units in the little army of tailors and tailoresses at the Broad Street factory. A system of cartage is in force, by which carriers bring in finished garments and take away materials for their making, daily, to these outlying auxiliary workers.

Later on, the home trade was resumed, and has ever since been successfully and energetically prosecuted, eight travellers working the British Islands for the firm. In 1887 Sir Charles Wathen retired from active association with the house, whose present members consist of three well-known Bristol gentlemen, Mr. Robert McAulay Hill, Mr. Fred. W. Lewis, and Mr. William Hill, each of whom vied with the other in rendering my task of exploration and discovery easy, pleasant, and understandable. All these gentlemen

MR. FRED. W. LEWIS.



MR. ROBERT MCAULAY HILL.

MR. WILLIAM HILL.

have been associated with the production of ready-made clothes for many, many years, never knowing another occupation, and building up a united experience which should go far to sustain the long-since-acquired premier position of Wathen, Gardiner, & Co. Up to the time of going to press this trio of ready-made men have collectively devoted eighty-four years of unremitting labour to the duty of providing clothing for the rest of mankind.

It has long been a matter of public conviction, and, unfortunately, in many cases justly so, that no more miserable and underpaid occupation exists than that of ready-made clothes making. But what is one thing in the East of London is another in the West of England. I am speaking from the best of recent personal observation when I assert that

the workers in this trade in Bristol appear to lead as happy, as contented, and as remunerative factory existences as any of their fellow-workers in many more highly thought of Bristol occupations.

The tailor has never received justice from his critics. His goose is always being cooked for him, as it were, by those least qualified by knowledge of the subject to undertake this culinary feat. That tailors have long been popularly considered as only parts of men, receives support from the greeting awarded by that clothes-horse sovereign Elizabeth, when receiving a deputation of eighteen of the snips of the period, in this wise: "*Good morning, gentlemen, both!*" If his detractors were but made to do without him and his good offices for never so short a period, his rise for good in their estimation would be a considerable one. Long-suffering and patient, the tailor threads his way through life and



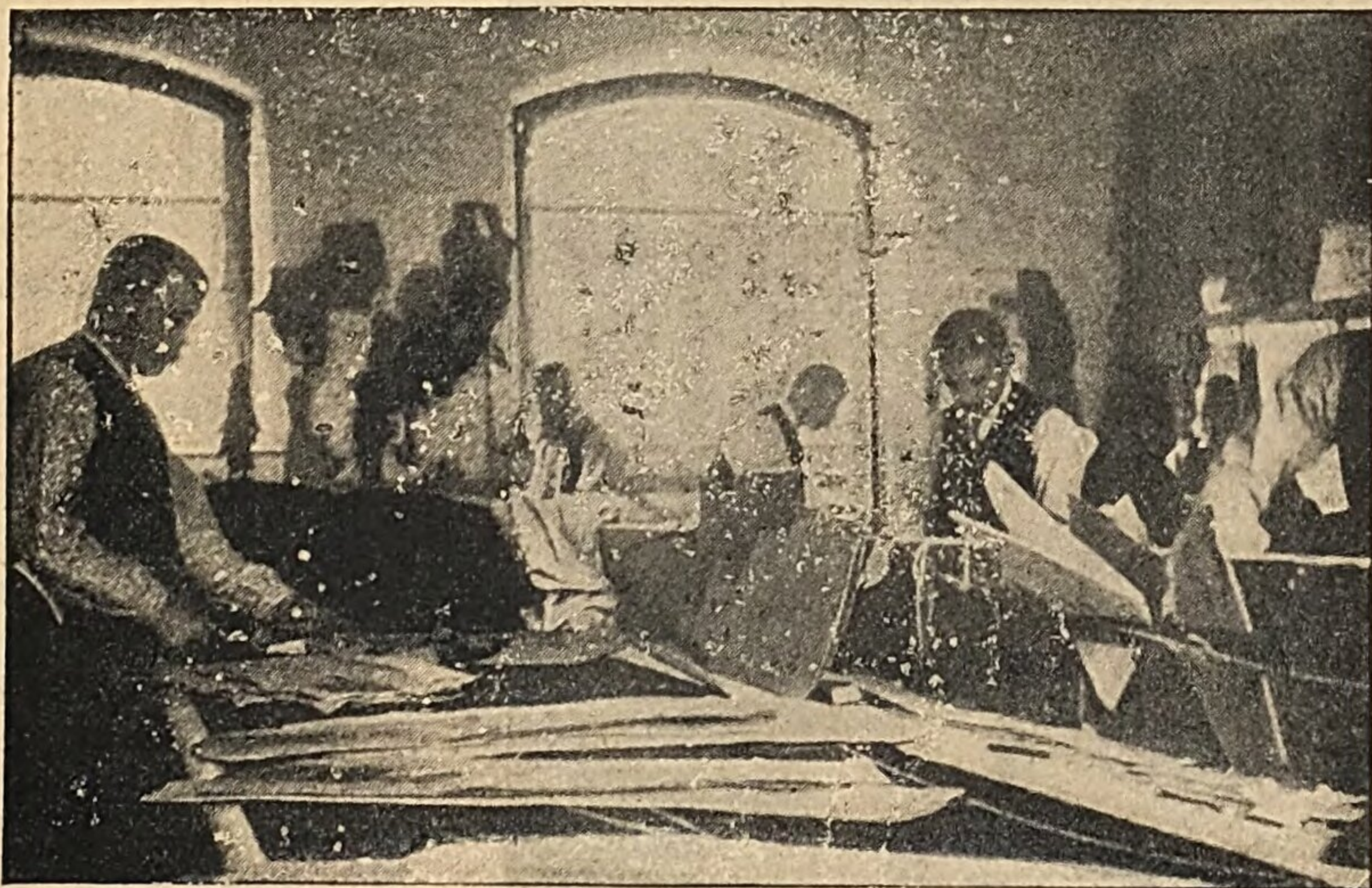
THE LATE SIR CHARLES WATHEN.

cloth, filled with the conviction that in more appreciative times he and his class will obtain that consideration from those they clothe to which they have always hitherto been strangers. Clothing—ready-made clothing—is a fine art. Of that I am convinced; and the conversion of the multitude of prejudiced readers who know not this veritable truth shall be the burden of what remains to be written about clothes.

The remarkable contrast between the old and the new, the past and the present, is nowhere more strikingly embodied than in the premises of this firm of wholesale clothiers in Broad Street, which, by the way, most paradoxically belies its name. The ancient labyrinth of quaint buildings which together make up the Bristol factory of the firm, form almost as happy a hunting-ground for the antiquarian as material for a treatise upon the manufacture of clothes. The state of perfect repair abounding everywhere does not mitigate in the least the patriarchal associations of every nook and corner of this interesting

block of houses, with their unspoken tales of an age that is past, of a history that is not ours. The offices have the old-world comfort of the inn that Dickens imagined and described, and which unfortunately never appeared to have other existence. I appeared to be alone in my old-fashioned ruminations upon sentimental associations. All else, clerks, workpeople, heads of departments, appeared too much intent upon the study of to-day and the output thereof, to devote any thought to a period with which they were not in any immediate association. It is as well there are practical people in the world. This is not a good time for dreamers.

I was shown the great underground storerooms, in which many thousands of yards of cloth awaited the fate that was to cut them up considerably. Cloths were here which represented all the four corners of Great Britain. Scotch tweeds fraternised



A CUTTING ROOM.

with Irish ditto, and Yorkshire cloths lay in amicable quiescence alongside bales of west-country stuffs. Even the Continent supplied its quota of garment-making material, and I could not, even in this typical home of British workmanship, escape the legend "Made in Germany!" I was, in addition to this inspection, permitted to look through the pattern books of the firm, which would overshadow with their wonderful bulk the most Brobdingnagian of family Bibles. Dozens of thousands of pieces of cloth, each of which represented a stored-away bulk of dozens of yards, were passed before my eyes, until I had lost all consciousness of a world other than one of patches. There was a confusing medley of saxonys, cheviots, worsteds, serges, vicunas, meltons, pilots, naps, friezes, flannels, drills, ducks, moles, cottons, and so on, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Confusion was rendered the more confounded by a further panorama of linings and trimmings, in silks, calicoes, canvases, and a legion of other

necessaries in a house which presses it suits by the million—amorous place that it is. Hundreds of tons of these cloths enter the house every half-year, to pass out in a trouser, jacket, or other form. Different countries require different clothing. Cold climates necessitate different treatment to hot ones from the hands of the costumier, and then the dissimilarity in tastes counts for much in satisfying a demand. The Dutch Boer is not so easily satisfied as the Kaffir upon the question of clothing. The latter is strongly of opinion that man wants but little clothing here below, or above. And the necessity for this stupendous array of variety in clothes, in kind and colour, is the price to be paid for a trade whose extent is bounded only by the horizon. Having



A PRESSING TABLE.

been thoroughly convinced of the ability of the firm to execute any personal order for clothes I might be tempted to place with them, I proceeded further on my inquiring quest, and ascended to the examining room.

All the cloth bought and used by the firm must enter here. It is "perched" up aloft, for it is brought here in a lift; it is then unrolled and pulled over the "perch," so that any defects in the cloth are discernible during this preliminary process and are marked with red cotton, so that they are noticeable when being cut up, and are carefully avoided: after which it is blocked and measured simultaneously by a machine—an ingenious piece of mechanism which indexes the number of yards as it rolls them. The cloth which goes to form a ready-made article of this firm's must be

sound above all things, a feature worth making a noise about. Having passed the examination, it is entered out to the cutters as it is wanted.

There are several cutting-rooms in various different portions of this intricate crowd of buildings, all devoted to the same object. The walls of these rooms are literally papered with countless brown-paper "patterns," and everything about the place appears much cut up. The bales of cloth are placed on long tables, and receive on their spread-out surfaces many chalked-up hieroglyphics of strange and wonderful design. Sheer strength is responsible for the cutting round these chalk-marks, aided by a large pair

of scissors and the skill of the cutter acquired by long experience. When the garments have been cut out, the piece trimmings are enclosed, and the whole rolled into bundle-form, and sent into the trimming-room to receive their quota of buttons, braids, and sewings. This trimming-room is a sight. Myriads of bobbins of cottons and threads of every colour and size are there encased in great drawers, surrounded by a sea of buttons, braids, silks, and other trimmings, all equally strange to the eyes of the uninitiated. They are then distributed, some to outside workers, others to the factory hands.

The strange thing about all that follows is that a worker is only employed on one article of apparel. The trouser hand has nothing in common with her of the vest, who in turn has never tried her hand at coat work. The people who earn their bread and butter at making "juveniles" do nothing else. To them the mysteries of the making of an adult's garments is a sealed book. They spend their working lives in turning out "juveniles," a pleasanter form of "chucking out" than one might think. There are great relays of workpeople to each separate class of article, and this systematic procedure is evidently the only possible one when clothes are produced with the fertility of mackerel in season.

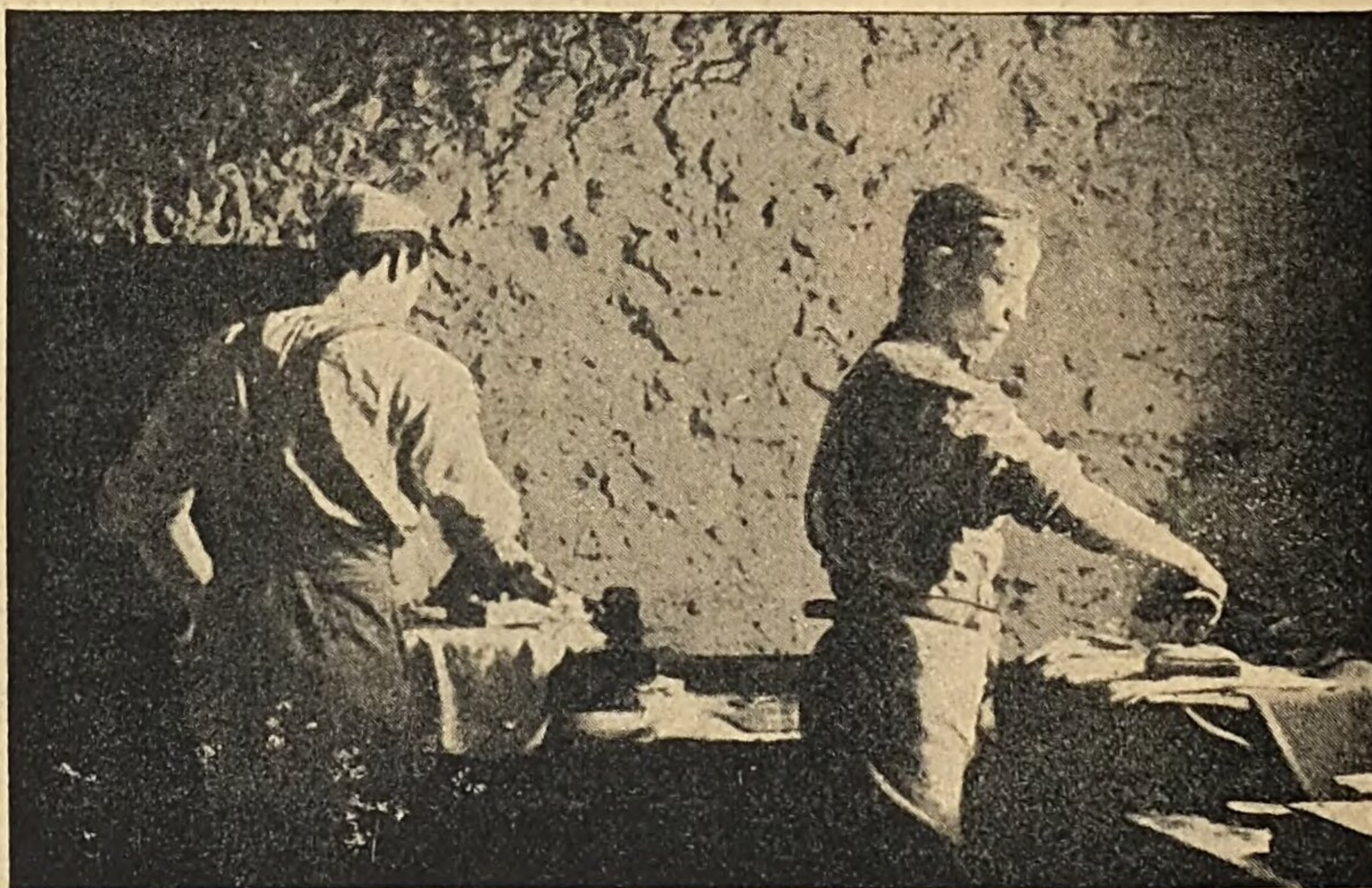
The prejudice against ready-made clothing has only to be considered to disappear. It has not been given to everyone to "see how it is done" as it has been to me, or the bespoke tailoring of this country would be *non est*. Nothing is so astonishing as the mathematical precision and unfaltering exactness with which great numbers of suits are turned out for numberless unknown persons, who nevertheless will be perfectly fitted by these suits when occasion arises. So perfect is the method employed here of taking the average person's measure, that quite 95 per cent. of the population are, if they only knew it, independent of the individual torture of being measured for their clothes. There is a code of measures which, unlike the successful journalist, cannot lie. The gentlemen of the firm who interested themselves in my inquisitive mission,



POWER ROLLER PRESSING MACHINE.

placed before me some staggeringly convincing tests of the correctness of their system. All sorts and shapes of men were brought up before my judgment seat, a No. 2 or 3 or 4 suit was allotted, and in every case proved to be a perfect fit, a thing I had long been a stranger to in my own person. But *nous avons changé tout cela*, and the bespoke-tailor is no longer a friend of mine, and can cease to send in his bills—a harmless little custom I had hitherto allowed him to indulge in without active interference in any shape or form on my part.

If men only knew the absolute veracity of this conclusion, and were aware that for one quarter of the price they pay (or owe) for their bespoke-made clothes, they could possess themselves of as suitable apparel, equal in every respect where it did not excel—upon the scores of quality and workmanship in particular—what an increase there would



COLLAR PRESSING.

be in the ready-made outfitter's *clientèle*! And apart from the immense and natural difference in cost of a thing made in dozens of thousands by the aid of all sorts of labour-saving appliances, as compared with the singly treated article, is not the omission of the dreadful preliminary ordeals of measurement, trying on, and retrying on, without which no tailor who knows his business will work, or believes necessary—is not all this worth something? I shall have indeed merited the conceit I cherish, in holding that I am a benefactor of the human race, if I have succeeded in brushing away the cobwebs of ready-made prejudice which still exists among a class who ought to know better, and imbuing them in its place with a belief in the fitness of the retail outfitter to do for all what they already do for so many. The long and the short, the stout and the slender, and those who are neither one nor the other, or half of these or all of these; the man of slim proportions, and the man who has run to waist—all can depend upon being fitted

with an outer covering for the body, without preliminary cantering, without three parts of the cost.

Now, having delivered myself of my plea for the fair try-on of the ready-made suit, I will deal with the intricacies of the manufacture of this much-to-be-commended combination of body wraps. I have traced the cloth through its cutting stages, noticed it supplied with trimmings and sundries, and must now follow it into the different workrooms, which between them are responsible for its becoming a finished product.

In my opinion trousers are the most important articles of male clothing. A man might do without his coat or his vest or his hat on an emergency, but trousers—never. They are also the first thing a man dons, and I give them the place of honour for the purpose of description. So I will endeavour to show how trousers are made, as I with my own eyes saw them.



PRESSING MACHINES.

The pieces of cloth which have come up to this particular work-room are taken in hand by the large number of female workers who are its occupants. The bottoms of the trousers that are to be—that is, the ends of them—are well shrunk, so as to give them a nice easy appearance over the boot when made. The pieces of cloth are then tacked together for seaming, so that the machinists cannot make mistakes in this matter: for all things are not what they seem. The pockets are then affixed, and the tops of the garment bound. It is then taken to a “pressing” machine, which presses out the seams in a manner and with an ease that puts the ordinary flat-iron to shame unbounded.

Now the buttoning of trousers receives here all the attention it indisputably deserves. Every trousered man has known at one time or another how much has depended upon the

straining capacity of his trouser buttons. On the whole, I should say that trouser buttons are responsible in an almost equal degree with shirt buttons for three parts of the work of the recording angel. I may be wrong, but at all events that is what I think. A parting is always a painful thing, whether it is at a railway station or on a man's head. But there are no sentimental feelings about the trouser button. It parts from its cloth affixment with unblushing equanimity, and at all times and seasons. This idiosyncrasy of the trouser button has driven more well-meaning young fellows into marriage than the force of any bad example. But this is now a retrospective evil. Bad sewing and bad language have now nothing to do with the buttons of Messrs. Wathen, Gardiner, & Co.'s trousers. The buttons are put on by a process, for the initiation of which the firm deserve the thanks of a long-suffering and button-strewing humanity. They are



A TROUSER ROOM.

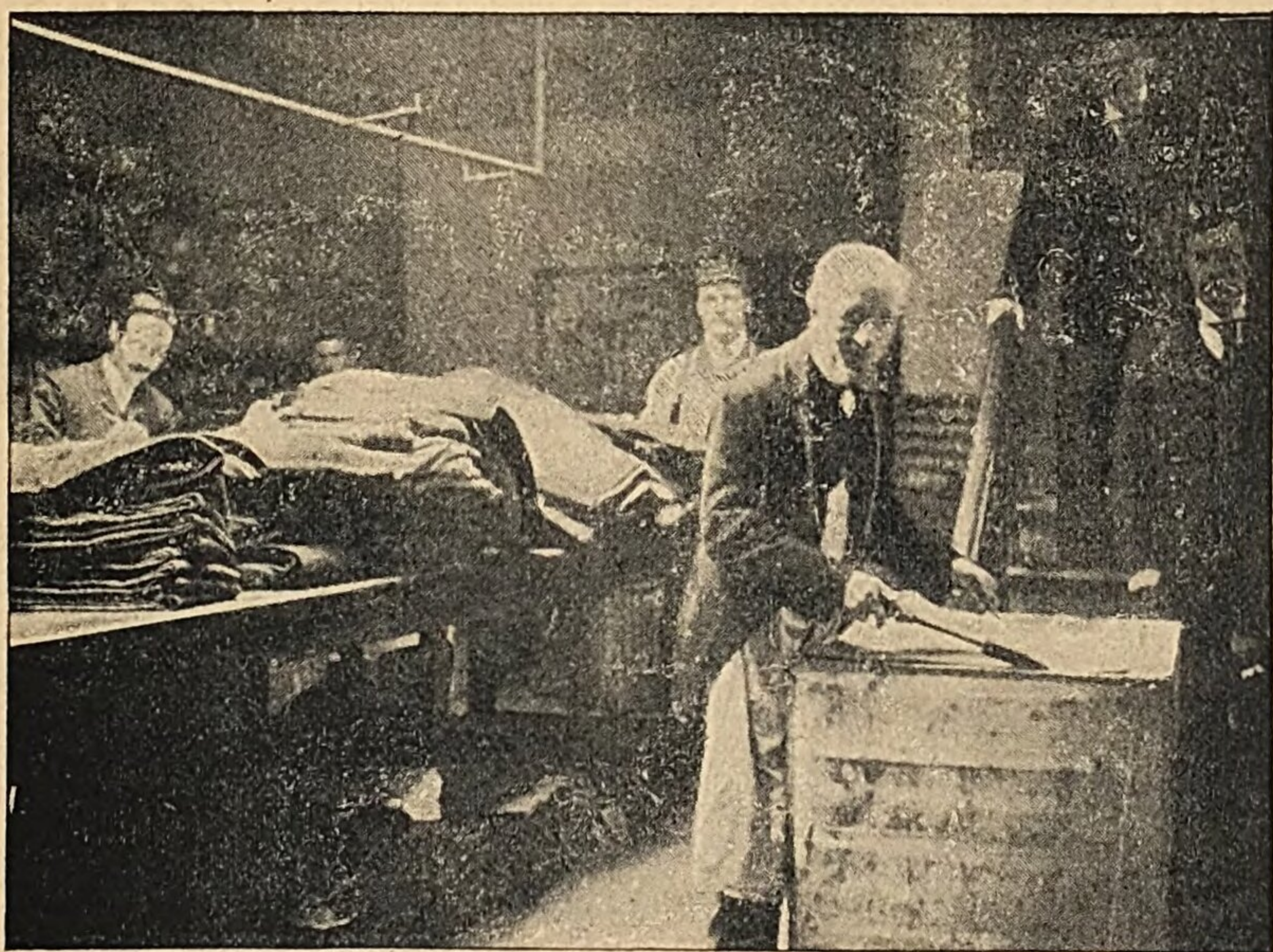
riveted on. And the person who could wear one of these buttons out before the trousers of which it forms a small but indispensable part, has not yet been discovered.

The trousers, being already canvased, are now lined and finished. Before this is completed they are placed over a machine called the blocker, which steams them into the proper shape necessitated by the required fall over the shoe, and the dictates of the prevailing fashion.

The vests are all made by the firm's out-door hands, so I will pass on to the coats.

To view this operation I visited one of the coat-making rooms. Here were disported on benches and tables girls of all ages and styles and proportions, busily sewing. They enjoy their work seemingly, for snatches of song frequently intersperse the general chatter

and prevailing air of good humour. Along one side of the big room were two rows of sewing-machines, a seemingly endless array, which were actively engaged in noise production in competition with the girls' tongues. It is here that the coat of every-day life, and for the matter of that, the best Sunday-go-to-meeting coat also, is made. The fashioned pieces of stuff are marked with cotton in those places where buttons will eventually be. The pockets—or the places where they will go—are then cut. The pocket itself is then filled in; then the flaps for them are sewn on. The canvas filling—which one wonders at being where it is when the torn condition of one's garment reveals it to mortal gaze—is then placed. Then a good face is put on the matter by the facing process, which smoothes over all the edges. The sleeve then goes into its proper place, as also does the lining. It is not everything or everybody that knows how to keep



A PACKING ROOM.

there. Then some padding is put in and some quilting done, and a general pressing to keep the seams in their proper positions, after which the collar is put on. Then they are button-holed. I have frequently been button-holed myself, but never by machinery. The button-cutting and holeing machine is a clever contrivance. No hand sewing, in my opinion, can vie with the work of this instrument upon the score of durability or appearance; and as for the difference in time, a whole coat can be button-holed while a needle is being threaded—and if I had to do the threading, the contrast might be made even greater without any divergence from that strict line of veracity which is my principal characteristic. The coat has its buttons put on, and then goes to the pressing room, where brawny-armed pressers take it in hand, remove all the creases, and give the coat its finished appearance. It is then ready for examination. If passed—and it has to be complete and

perfect in every detail ere it is—it is sent down with hundreds of others, to go here and there, perhaps all over the world.

I have omitted to mention that coat-collars are all blocked—*i.e.*, pressed by hand. Male labour is employed for this. One of the striking features of this firm's methods is that hand labour is utilised to an extent which must argue well for the quality of their work. Everything is paid for at a fixed and fair price. "Sweating" is not to be found here, except in the form of honest perspiration. It is in that dreadful East of London that the demon sweater lives and is endured. It is there that man's labour is gauged at a lower level than that of the brute beast; there the worship of self-betterment in its basest form, and where the cry is "*Allah il Allah!*" and the "sweated" is his profit.

An interesting room was one in which a very "designing" gentleman held undisputed,



EMPLOYÉES OF THE FIRM OF OVER TWENTY-ONE YEARS' INDIVIDUAL SERVICE.

steady sway. The firm are leaders of fashion, and to cut a new thing in dashes and shapes is this gentleman's daily avocation. In the constant desire for change, the scope for his inventive powers is never ending. He is a genius in his way, and there I will let him rest. It is here or hereabouts that the pattern books of the firm are made up. These are sent to clients the wide-world over, and are the most comprehensive and complete representative things of the kind I have ever had brought under my notice. Here is the buyer's opportunity, wherever he may be.

The visit to the shipping department of the firm was interesting to a degree. There were piled up, ready for packing in the tin-lined cases I saw about, piles of vestments and trouserings in all kinds of materials. One lot was white mole trousers for Queensland, another comprised great stores of tennis cloth jackets and trousers for the Cape, and

further, a shipment of tweeds for New Zealand. Then, what with the fine worsted, tweed, and cotton goods for other parts of the world, I obtained a fair idea of the immense ramifications of the house. This shipping room, by the way, is an interesting piece of old Bristol. It was formerly the County Court of the city—was that, in fact, some twenty-seven years ago. But it, like other adjacent buildings, has been swallowed up by the increasing requirements of this old firm.

I believe I have passed in review most of the distinctive features of clothes making. To aid me in my task I have had the hearty co-operation of the members of one of the greatest clothing manufactories in the world, which has for long held the first place in colonial trading. But the future for ready-made clothes is a bright one. It is not that man is going to wear more clothes, but more of them will eventually buy them ready-made. I will, for one. And one suit of example is better than a whole shopful of precept.

Bristol's geographical advantages make it a splendid centre for this trade, home and foreign. It has always been a progressive trade, and in Bristol there is a direct contact between the employer and employé, which renders the further extension of this industry a welcome factor in the labour market. There is no middleman, as in the clothing centre of the metropolis, and all the evils that ready-made clothes are heir to are traceable to this undesirable individual. It must not be forgotten, to the credit of this Bristol firm, that in establishing the first factories in the district for the purpose of training up the population in the way of clothes-making, they have rendered the city a signal service, and bestowed upon the community a great and increasing wage-earning class. I believe as much in the future of Bristol, as I am convinced of the great work it has done in the past, and is accomplishing now. And while it boasts, and boasts with justice, of such business houses as the one I have been through in person and in pen, and which has made me the richer by a prejudice the less, those who differ from my conclusion must be the veriest croakers, and discernless to boot. Which brings me to the end of my discourse on clothes.

Sir Charles Wathen, six times Mayor of Bristol, and for long the active head of this firm of clothes manufacturers, has, almost as I write, been gathered to his rest. This hard-working, earnest, philanthropic gentleman died in the Council Chamber of Bristol on February 14th, 1893—died as so public-spirited a man would have wished to die—in harness. He was one of Bristol's greatest citizens; the most active of its aldermen, but—*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*.

ON HATS.

BRISTOL is a peg upon which to hang a claim to superiority in almost every trade under the sun. As becomes this typical city of extremes, the home of the boot trade provides a resting place for many large head-covering industries: a statement which caps most of the paradoxical peculiarities I have instanced about Bristol in other places. Ever since a hare-brained civilisation introduced a covering for the head other than the matted one provided by nature, it has been the custom to wear hats or caps or bonnets, according to the taste and sex of the wearer. Man had but little hair here below, but wore that little long: a custom which was seriously interfered with under the hat *régime*. The arrival of the hat brought in its train the steady deterioration of hair-growing as a national crop.

This is anything but a bald statement of fact. The "crop" is no longer a thing of beauty or a joy for ever. It is only one of the marks of State interference in force at Her Majesty's Prisons. Man has paid dearly for the introduction of the hat into civilisation, though the unkindest cut of all was the bonnet. Breathes there a married man to-day who does not think with a ravenous envy of the time when neither milliners nor hatters had a part in the national existence? I trow not. All of which affords more food for reflection than matter for this book.

The word hat is of Saxon origin. It began life in the modestest manner, though the process of evolution testified to its being but a stepping-stone to higher things. Originally intended as a mere outdoor covering for the head, it has grown into being an integral part of ourselves, and an emblem by which a man's position in life and his respectability as a liver is unspokenly demonstrated. The hat of to-day is distinguishable from the hat of to-morrow inasmuch that it may be taken down a peg—in mistake, by its to-be wrongful owner. Hats, except they be very old ones, are not always with us. More than any other article of apparel they teach the gospel of the more popular of the many Socialistic arguments. The principle of what is mine being somebody else's, if one is not very careful, is in nothing so persistently demonstrated as in the life of the ordinary hat.

Now to come to the point (if the expression is permissible with such a pointless article). Hat is the generic name for a head covering for the male man, and bonnet for the un-male woman. The ancient Greek mariners had various styles of head covering—mostly taking the form and substance of their mother earth. Hesiod speaks of the *pilos* being a suitable form of head-covering in cold weather, as it covered both ears, necessarily making

a long job of it. It is also said to have been worn as an anything but silver lining to the helmet. It was made of felt, and took various strange forms, some of them not being unlike the felt hat of to-day—a thing easy of belief. The *apex* of the Romans was also a head-covering of a conical shape, and was worn from the time of Numa. The Greek *petasos* had a brim, and was not unlike the round felt now worn. Among the Romans, the cap was a symbol of liberty, and was worn by slaves on their manumission. With us, it is rather a form of slavish deference to the dictates of a senseless fashion.

Our respected ancestors, the Anglo-Saxons, appear not to have worn hats at the early period of their history. They were content to let their hair grow long, doubtless because the small boy of the period was not possessed of the same vicious tendency to proffer unpolite advice on so personal a subject as the cutting of one's hair, as is his prototype of our own and ruder times. About the eighth century they began to wear caps, and from this period we may fitly deduce the fall and decline of man. These caps were made of animals' skins, dressed with the hair to the outside. The hats of felt or wool appear to have been introduced about the ninth century, but a failing memory may be excused any slight error upon this particular.

Beaver is spoken of as a material for hat making as long ago as the middle of the twelfth century. The earliest English writers are guilty of a knowledge of hats, and in the fourteenth century these head coverings were gaily ornamented with plumes. It is obvious from all this that that proverbially insane gentleman, the hatter, had an existence before our time. I read that in the year 1360 there were hatters (*Filzhappenmacher*) in Nürnberg. But even those things they made better than in France. It is to that gay and festive nation we owe everything we have paid so dearly for in the hat way. It took the concentrated genius of the French to evolve the high hat of our own and children's times. It *was* evolved. It was not one of those things which are sprung upon an expectant world in all the glory of a perfect completeness. If nations have been the playthings of kings, hats have provided their serious moments. It was Louis XII. who abolished the velvet skull cap of his early days, and made the world one headache the richer by providing it with the direct progenitor of our irreproachable high hat. It was round with a small brim, differing only from its descendant by being pointed at the top and being further ornamented with feathers. Then Francis I. spared what time he could from his amours and wars, by devoting some attention to the hat question, and earned a place in history by his contribution to a matter affecting the heads of all his subjects. He made broad-brimmed hats fashionable, and died. Then perukes had an innings about the time of Louis XIV. This was a distinct revolution in hats—a round-about-face, as it were. The hat was no longer a covering for the head, but an ornament for the arm. It was three-cornered in shape, and by the ease or otherwise with which it was carried, set the seal upon the carriers' claim to good breeding or otherwise. These triangular pieces of cloth prevailed until gradually a relapse into the present form of chimney-pot hat settled men's minds seemingly for then and all time. It also added the word "tile" to the many forms of description analogous to the genus hat. In most European countries, and in all North American States, this form of hat now prevails, demonstrating the ascendancy of France as a director of fashions to the rest

of the countries of the earth, if it also testifies to the preponderance of that portion of humanity which the Sage of Chelsea considered an overwhelming majority of the human race.

I could well devote this opportunity to a history of the high hat. It is a lofty subject, worthy of the attention it commands from all owners of such. And yet it is not a thing one can dismiss peremptorily from one's head. Everything else has altered; nature itself has joined in the prevailing craving for change. Religions have been cut to suit the times; the *Times* has been cut in turn by many religions; but the high hat goes on its way unaltered and undone. It still lifts its silk-felted glory to the admiring heavens, while the suns and snows of centuries have alike failed in deposing it from its cylindrical sphere. Individual high hats may come and go, but the high hat is endured for ever. In manner it is silky, but scarcely a power in Europe is so felt. It is the symbol of city merchant and city clerk, and those who shirk the responsibility of wearing it are accursed of modern men—and hatters. And there is much to explain this high-and-mighty contempt for all other hats. Small people wear it that they may rise in the world—several inches; tall people affix themselves to it so that they may not be lowered in the eyes of others; and those who are neither tall nor short cannot make headway against the prevailing hunger for doing as others do. It is singular that those who revolted against the laws of society in the concrete, were the first to rebel against the laws of fashion in the abstract. Highfalutin became synonymous with low hats, and the determination to crush both monarchies and the head covering they countenanced at the same time, became the sole object in life to many. And for a brief period the hat of modest ambitions had its day, and the great and noisy men of the century metaphorically cast the silky tube behind them, and became disciples of the billycock, the slouch, and the tam-o'-shanter. It is easier to tell a man's opinions by the hat he wears, than by the sentiments he gives utterance to. No *fin de siècle* imagination could conceive Keir Hardie in a high hat, or Diogenes, or Shakespeare, or Columbus—or the writer. But for mighty millions who are not any of these great men, the high hat has still a hold upon their affections that nothing short of an earthquake could shake.

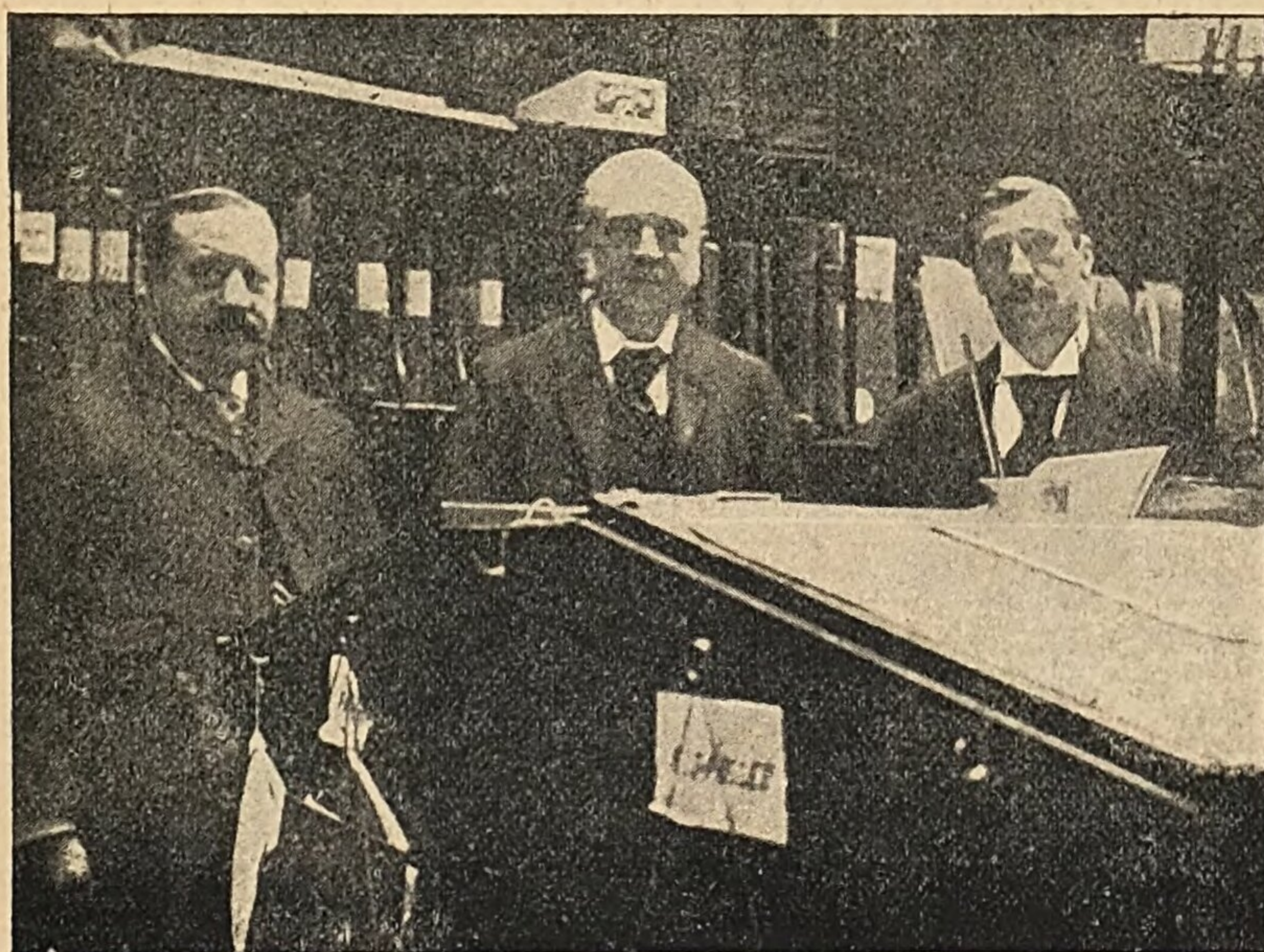
This belief in the fixity of the high hat is due to the effect of what I saw at the manufactory of Betty Bros. & Co., at Bristol. Here I witnessed the most practical of demonstrations as to its demand by a public who *will* wear it, and obtained much insight into the materials and method which together go to give it being. Bristol has been associated with hat-making right through the centuries. The hats once rendered famous by Mr. Gladstone are stated to have been of Bristol inception; a sufficient proof of the tremendous age hat making has attained in this Avonly city. There are quite a large number of firms devoted to the production of high and low hats in Bristol. An account of the methods of manufacture of any one firm is tantamount to a description of all. And this one will best answer my purpose.

In the beginning, the founders of this firm were not connected with the hat industry, other than through the assistance they rendered it in wearing out those they wore. Life to the brothers Betty consisted of the usual evolutionary courses, comprising measles, school-going, and marble-playing. The boy is father of the man, and at a very early age

both brothers proved their fitness for their future career in the world of trade by frequently getting into the hat. The eldest, Samuel, went to London, where he was "shopped" at an old firm of hatters in London Wall. Four years afterwards he returned to Bristol, determined to make use of his experience of London and hat-making, in his native city. He found a willing helper and partner in his brother, William Francis Betty, who was also in the hat trade. So the two joined forces, and founded in that year of grace 1868 their present well-known firm.

At this period the whole of the Bristol hat manufactories were situated in a part of the city in or adjoining Castle Green, near hand which an old castle had made way for less substantial buildings, devoted to more prosaic and up-to-date uses. So in Castle Green

MR. SAMUEL BETTY.



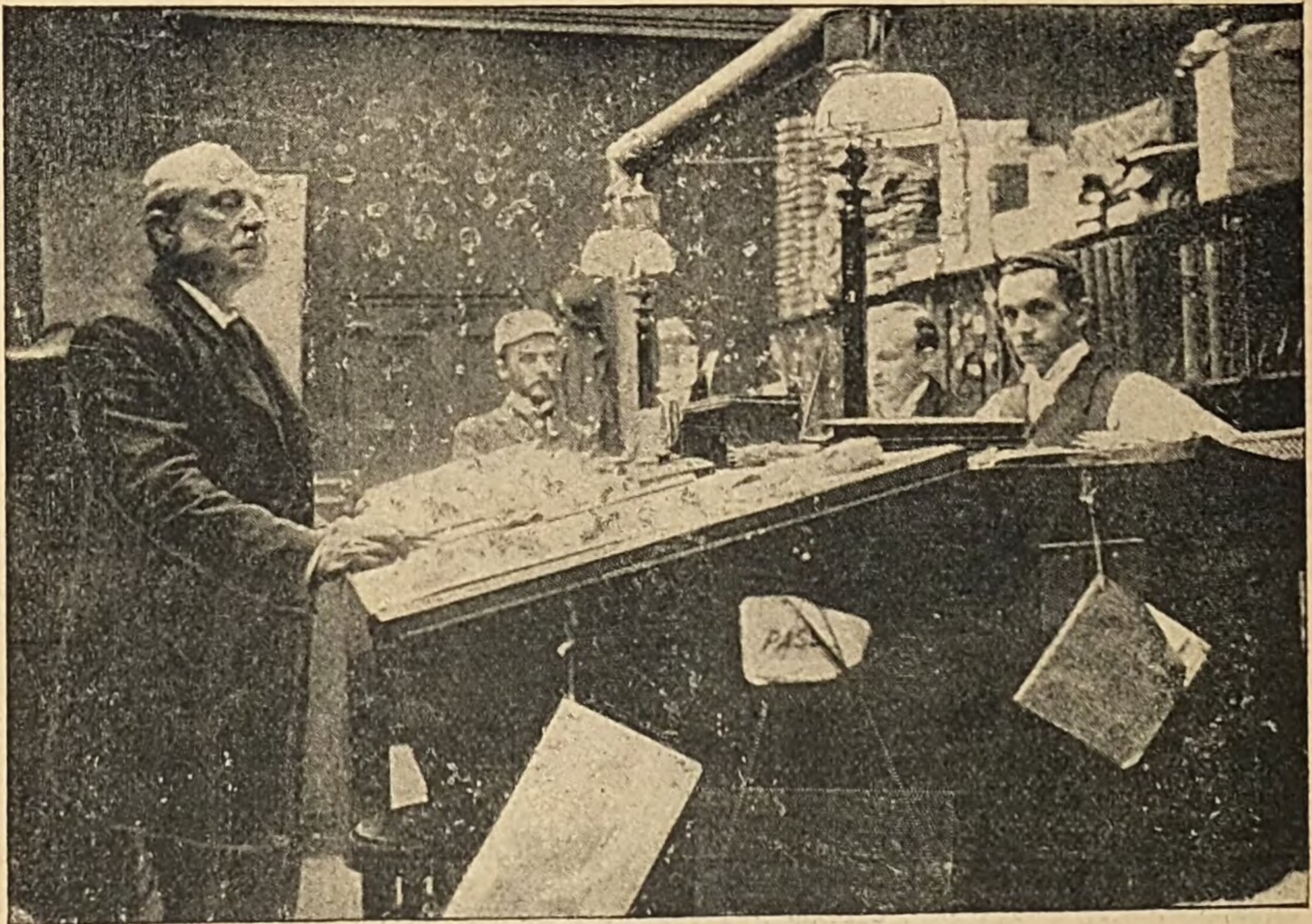
MR. WILLIAM F. BETTY.

MR. WALTER S. BETTY.

the brothers Betty pitched their tent, and with this roof over their heads they betook themselves with much assiduity to the provision of coverings to be placed over other people's. Whether it was that more people were born into the world to perpetrate the wearing of hats, or whether it was that there was something which distinguished the hats made by the brothers Betty from those made by other people's brothers, history relates not. But I find that increasing business coupled with a determination upon the part of their landlord to raise the rent of such prosperous tenants, necessitated the removal to other and larger premises. So Castle Green was left to the hatters and the other denizens thereof, and Victoria Street, the business thoroughfare of Bristol—a street of unusual Bristolian width, and flanked by handsome stone erections to the greatness of Bristol's industrial proprietors—was made the richer by the transference of this rising

firm of manufacturers, who were making real headway in the trade of their choice and of other people's necessity.

I spent much time in seeing how hats were made, a successfully laudable determination for which I have to thank the courtesy of Messrs. Betty in the first place, and my strong constitution in the second. I traversed many rooms and ascended many stairs ere I reached the topmost regions of these Victoria Street buildings, in which the actual manufacture, as opposed to the storing and displaying of hats, is carried on. Of the things that I learnt from this visit, one was, that though opinion may be divided upon the question of the beauty of the high hat when made, there cannot be a difference of thought about the ingenuity and simplicity employed in the making of it. Now I wonder how many of the toiling millions who wear high hats, as opposed to those who toil from



OFFICE.

other causes and with other head coverings, are aware of how that hat came to have a being and of what materials it is composed? Personally I have inclined to the belief that apart from its purpose as a strangely ordained punishment for man's sins, the high hat was in the main substance a piece of cardboard. I was wrong; I admit it with all the frankness which an ocular demonstration of its incorrectness can invest the confession of error. It will now be my pleasing duty to remove all such and similar misconceptions from other minds.

It takes three men to make one high hat. Less than that number have often been found sufficient to take one. Any loser of a high hat will testify to the truth of this latter statement. Before any of these three men can set to work, they have to be provided with the necessary materials for hat construction. These are soon obtained. They consist

solely and simply of different pieces of calico which are impregnated with liquid shellac, and drawn one over the other until the necessary thickness of the material required for the several kinds of hats is obtained. When cool, the whole presents the appearance of one firm film, tough and pliable, forming a perfectly rigid band, impervious to air and to all save heat, which is applied considerably in hat manufacture through the agency of the flat-iron. In fact, after the shellaced calico, nothing has more to do with hat-making than the flat-iron. It is the hatter's *tool de résistance*, much as the hammer is the smith's, the baton the policeman's, and a profound disregard of the punishment that o'ertook Ananias—the journalist's.

But to proceed. The first process is known as body-making. And here, paradoxical as it may seem, the "block" plays a prominent part. It will already have been surmised



PILE-ING.

that the blockhead has a good deal to do with the high hat when a finished product, but that is altogether a different thing. The "block" in question is made of five pieces of wood, the centre piece being a wedge to tighten the others. The treated calico is now cut to the required shape, stretched round this block, and ironed down, forming the side crown. The shellaced calico, like man, is amenable to pressure, when applied with a flat-iron and heated to boot. This causes the edges and plies of the calico to adhere together. The top and brim, which are made of the same material, are now added, and fixed to the side crown by ironing. The block is now taken out, and a felt cover called a "shell" is placed between the body and block, so that the former may be freely ironed without risk of adhering to the latter. The body is then coated with gum-shellac, and placed in a drying room. When the finisher receives it again, it is

accompanied by a cover made of silk, tip and crown being sewn together, but the side seams being left open. He also receives a band of silk for the upper part, and a square of merino for the under part of the brim. The finisher irons the outer edge of the brim and draws the inner under a loop of wire he has placed round the body, and having cut it as smooth as possible, he pulls the loop tight with his foot, and irons down. The "tip" must be very carefully fitted, as the sewing must not overlap the top. One edge of the side crown cover is then ironed down, and the other carefully cut to fit it. The "nap" is brushed back, and carded back over the join. If skilfully done, the seam seems invisible. The art of finishing is the beginning of the perfection in hat making. It consists of retaining the brilliancy of colour in the silk plush, and keeping the hat a good



BODY-MAKING.

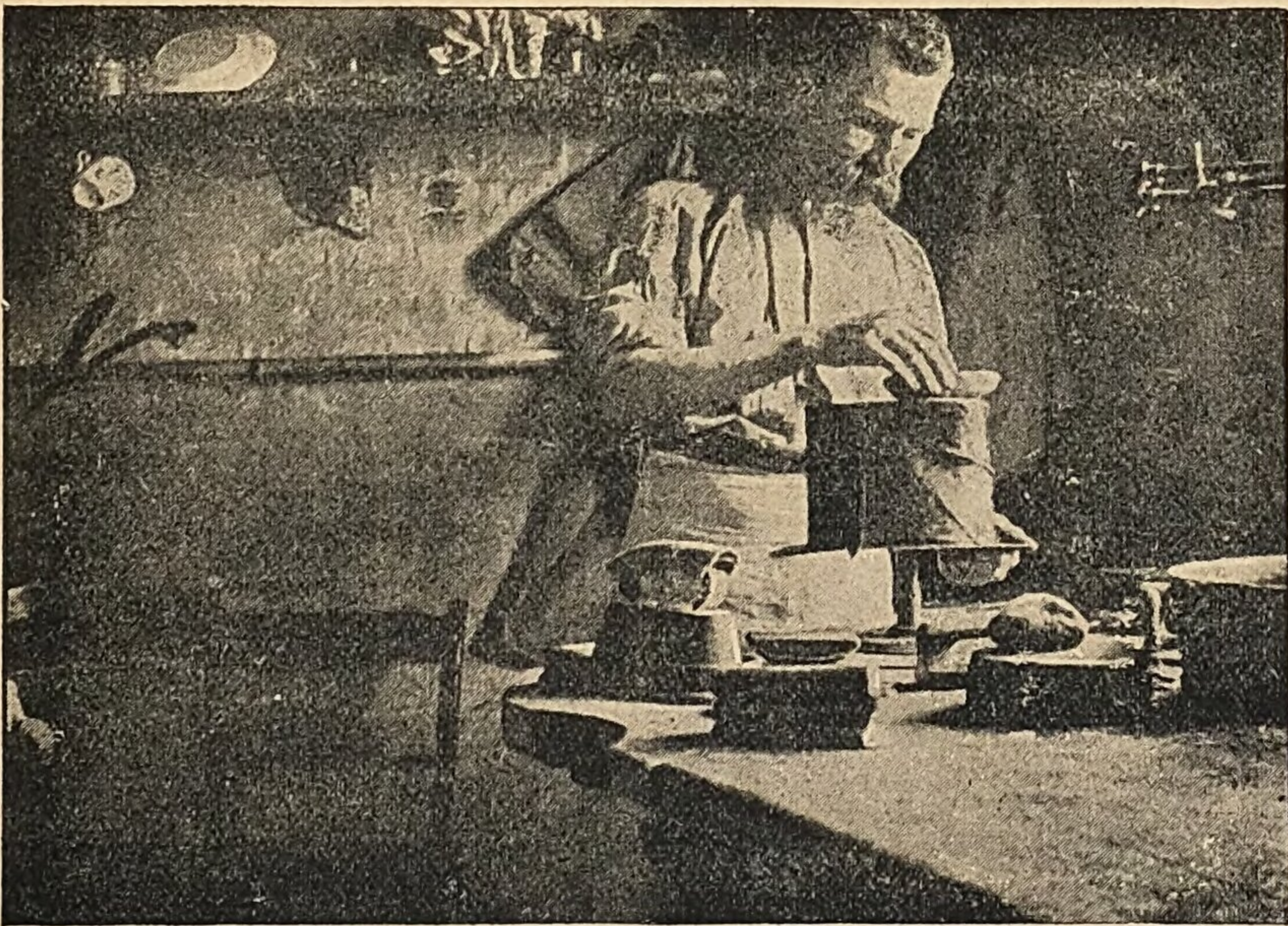
shape. The hat now gets a plentiful wetting with water and is ironed on the half-block, evidently on the principle that half a block is better than none.

The process known as "glazing" is then gone into. The hat is gone over with a wire brush, which straightens the nap, doing the trick, or five trick, as it were. Then it is sponged again with water, and allowed to dry—a most considerate allowance. When thoroughly recovered from its wetting, the glaze is brushed out. It is then cleaned by a piece of velvet, and a further series of ironing has its innings.

The gentleman known as the "shaper" then makes himself felt. He makes things curl, or, I should say, the brim. This is done according to fashion, and the number of fashions of brim curl is legion, and anything but legendary. There are, technically speaking, two kinds of curls, the "roll" curl and the "Anglesea" curl. But see the artfulness of these technicalities! These two are made responsible for as many distinct varieties of

curls as the hair is heir to. There are small and large roll curls, semi-roll curls, bastard roll curls, flat roll curls, open roll curls, but no bakers' roll curls. Then of the genus Anglesea there are also many. Small and large, pressed flat, open, pipe curls, edge curls, tight curls, and nary a sober curl among them. To obtain these curls, a thing called a rat-tail is employed, which is placed under the edge, and with the assistance of a hot iron and a strong man, help to twist the particular curl desired into shape.

The hat now wants trimming ere it is fit to go forth on its civilising mission. It is taken into a room in which a number of women and girls do much sewing. It is be-ribboned and be-leathered outside and inside—and there you are. The high hat,



HALF-BLOCKING.

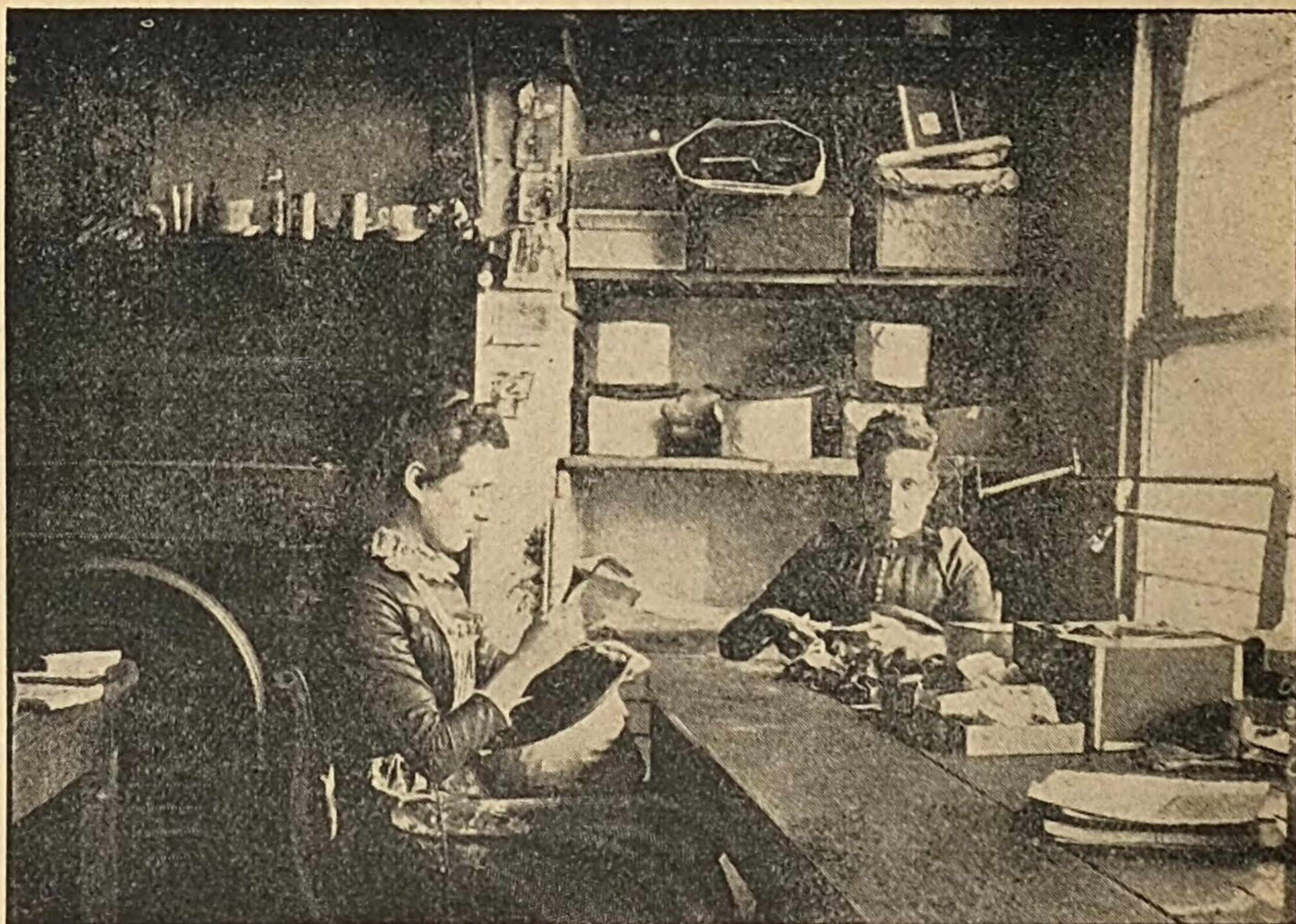
the companion of our youthful years and the friend of our hoary age, is there before us, a rigid cylinder, an incubus of woe.

Since high hats came to be recognised as a stern necessity, a lightening of the whole became the one object of the enterprising manufacturer, and with none more, if as much as Betty Bros. Mr. Samuel Betty still remembers, in spite of his youthful-looking middle-agedness, the time when the policemen in Bristol—who shares with the dog the privilege of being the friend of man in all countries where both are to be found—wore high hats. That this was a weighty matter I will show, for these hats weighed $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. a piece. A policeman who had so much as that on his head deserves all the pity that a lighter-hatted posterity can show his memory. Hats fifty years ago were so heavy, that they bore the burden of many years' hard wear with ease, and were transmitted from father to son much as any other hereditary vice might be.

They were veritable heirlooms, and a hat was not only expected to last one lifetime, but two or three. Those were bad times for hatters.

The descent from that was a light one. For this firm makes a speciality of a completed high hat which weighs no more than four ounces in weight, and which could be sent, if a letter, through the post for twopence.

Evidently if high hats are to be worn, they had best be worn with ease. To the many dreadful things for the responsibility of which the high hat is held accountable, must be added that of bald-head conducting. If there were no high hats there would be no bald heads. If there were no heads, there would be no high hats. Both truisms are worthy of the careful attention I have bestowed on their composition. So if only because of the



TRIMMING.

good work done as the Turkish bath of high hats, the workshops of Messrs. Betty are deserving of all the notice I can give them. They have reduced the weight of the high hat, and it must lie lightly upon their corporate conscience. The hat has hitherto been created as if the head was made to fit it, and not it the head. Now there is a great difference in heads, in their formation as well as in their value as constructive mechanisms. Messrs. Betty appear to be aware of this, and they give people fits with their hats accordingly.

Times have changed, and with them the old Gallic superiority in hat manufacturing. They do not now do these things better in France. Taken generally, the English silk hats are much superior to those of other countries. In the finishing of silk hats the place of precedence is taken by Great Britain, France coming next, and in turn followed by the

United States. But it is in the quality of the material employed that gives Great Britain her post of supremacy in this manufacture.

And now I have done with the high hat, and will devote a little more attention to the firm of Betty Bros. It must not be supposed that this house only please one taste in head-coverings. There is a public who courageously don less abused types, and for these the Brothers Betty cater in excellent style. In the large ware-rooms of the firm, through all of which I was taken, I saw many thousands of hats and caps of all shapes and materials—the felt, the cloth, the straw, and the unclassable. There were enough new hats here to supply all Bristol. But Messrs. Betty do more than that. To every part of hat-wearing Britain relays of their well-made wares are despatched, and bought, and used



CUTTING.

up. The new hat finds a competitor in some markets with what is called the "resurrected" hat, a thing purely and solely indigenous to the district yelet Whitechapel. This has a healthier life than its name would lead us to believe, or is creditable to our commercial honesty. It is a very grave subject, and there is far too much of it to have a dig at. I will not divulge the ways and means by which old hats are made into new ones, for fear I unwittingly add to the number of the producers thereof. But I know what they are, and when other means of livelihood have failed—but no matter.

The old Welsh hats, which were formerly worn by the witches of the historians' imagination, were first, and in fact always made in Bristol. A whole host of historical and other unreliable data could be furnished to prove the long and interesting association

of Bristol with the hat trade, had I time to hunt them up. I am wearing a hat myself that would do credit to any period of primitive hat-making. It may be a Bristol hat—one of the forerunners of those I have been at the pains of describing. But it is not always safe to judge by appearances.



FINISHING.

ON BOOTS.

TO probe to the depths of our understandings is really to arrive at the subject of boots. So I shall start probing; for boots and their kindred foot-coverings are to be the mainspring of my temporary inspiration. Without doubt it is in the order of appropriate incidents that I should deal with this lowly contribution to Bristol's industrial activity in this time and place. For now that my Western peregrinations are drawing to a close, I am in a position for accurately estimating the cost in shoe-leather my tramps of discovery have caused me. This either counts for much in any friendly estimate of my financial position, or for little if judged solely upon the quality of the shoe-leather, or the condition of Bristol road-ways. It is true the exigencies of time and space have not permitted me to indulge too frequently in the long-drawn-out-luxury of vehicular street locomotion, as they understand these things in Bristol. So the results of this estimate, from whichever of the many enumerated standpoints you take your view, is the same. What boots it that I am in a veritable hive of shoe-making! The shoes—if not exactly of my childhood's day, the companions of my middle age, the friends of many a quest, the object of frequent solicitous sole-ing and heel-ing—these are no longer things of beauty, but are worn beyond the reach of any repair and fit only for decent burial, or the soup-resurrectory courses of a Bristol restauraunt. I feel more than at most times the necessity of dealing with this matter of boots in a comprehensive spirit: for it, like my soon-to-be cast off friends, is not now a subject for patches.

It is my intention to leave the discovery of the period which first gave man acquaintance with boots—or what passed for them—to one who has more time for such researches than I have, and one who, moreover, is blessed with the necessary supply of friends to become responsible for his safe and strait-waistcoated keeping in what might be his subsequent care of need. For myself, I am content in recording that scarcely any of the ancient manuscripts I have had access to in connection with this veritable point of dispute, are old enough to omit reference to foot-covering in some more or less complete form. The Egyptians—at that period of their history which it would have suited me best to belong had I been an Egyptian—wore sandals among other things. These were made from the leaves of the papyrus, and raw, as opposed to rare hides, a small matter of three thousand years ago. Without doubt the earliest efforts of the clothiers of the foot were directed towards protecting the soles of the wearers. The time for saving them was not yet; the army of the Salvationists had their work still cut out a long way before them in those un-Halleluyah'd times. These sandals consisted of under-parts and their

over-fastening appliances. The latter were formed from linen, rushes, flax, bark of trees, and on occasion, metals. The simplicity of the whole contrivance is in remarkable contradistinction with a period in which the love of ornament was so strong. It would have been difficult for even a shoe-maker to have stuck to his last in those days.

One of the earliest forms of advertising I have knowledge of is that of a Mr. Baudoin, a shoemaker of the B.C. period, who announced that if God had intended man to go bare-footed, he would not have given him the skins of animals to make shoes from. That Providence is on the side of the biggest battalions I have been assured; but this statement of Mr. Baudoin's anent its interposition upon the behalf of workers in leather, somewhat staggers me. It is a singular commentary upon this, that the shoe-maker or cobbler of all ages—even our own—has posed in rhyme, in reason, and in prose, as the “advanced” man, the advocate of broad views theologically, politically, and conversationally. Pliny senior, who somewhat forestalled my endeavour to fix the responsibility of the original wearer of foot-coverings, asserts that Tychius, of Bœotia, was the first to wear shoes. Now I admit that there is little advantage to be gained in arguing such a point with a man who has fore-stalled you in dying by some few thousand years: except in the satisfaction obtained from a dispute in which one of the disputants is perforce *hors de combat*. But the gods forbend that I should combat such statements as this one of the elder Pliny, which he has failed to support by contributing the grounds for forming such a belief, or even by fixing the date of the so-called first wearer's existence. But I “hae ma doots,” though there is no controverting those past and gone historiographers.

In the time when I had idle moments, and when the study of the Greek and Roman classics helped to provide them, I learned that boot, shoe, and sandal-making were practised as fine and large arts at the earliest period; and besides, the fashions appertaining to foot gear were prescribed by legal enactments, so that the profession or rank of the wearer could be distinguished thereby. It were bootless to inquire into the occupation of the unshod; evidently no other distinguishing mark of their unsocial status was necessary. People then would not wear shoes if they could not wear the best. All that is changed now. We wear shoddy, rather than go un-shod. Plautus, in his “Bacchides,” tells of a rich man who wore shoes with soles of gold: and Seneca records that Julius Cæsar had a weakness running in the same precious-metallic groove. He was literally encased in gold, from the crown on his head to the soles on his feet. This insane custom has never been excelled even by the ludicrous excesses of the fashions in boots of our own times. No doubt this is partially due to the sad waste of good material such a custom would entail. But on the question of eccentricity, I think a more than is generally believed custom of wearing boots and shoes made of brown paper prevalent among us now, is deserving of taking equal rank with the instances I have quoted.

In Domitian's reign, Rome rained shoemakers. Its streets were so crowded with their stalls as to necessitate the passing of an edict for their eviction. The necessity for this is apparent when I instance that if in no other particular, the streets of Rome were on a par with those of Bristol on the scores of cleanliness and width; which is nevertheless not a narrow-minded view of things. The boot was once by far the most

important particular of a man's dress. In Rome, a man's opinions and position were determined by the boots he wore. In our time we have gone to the other extreme, and form our conclusions on those points from his hats. Looking back into a less remote past—the time of the choppines—we find that the ladies wore foot-covering which rose them in the world several feet more than the two they already possessed. Evelyn, an authority under this head, writes in an excusably stilted fashion on this subject:—" 'Tis ridiculous to see how these ladies crawl in and out of their gondolas (he was in Venice at the time—the ungodly one, not the Olympian) by reason of their choppines, and what dwarfs they appear when they are taken down from their wooden scaffolds." Much later, we find Shakespeare writing: "What my young mistress, by'r lady, your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last by the altitude of a choppine." An ancestor of mine—not he who punished posterity so vindictively by letting the American loose upon society—was once asked how he liked the ladies of Venice? With that brilliant wit, which I may incidentally mention has distinguished his descendants also, he replied that to him they were "*mezzo carno, mezzo ligno*," which translated means that they were neither one thing (wood) nor the other (flesh), "and he would have none of them." I conclude from this that the ancient Italians were the first to invent other instruments of torture of the boot school. The Romans favoured a shoe of iron in their playful moments, when they wished to bring the early Christians to book—I was nearly saying, to boot. The instrument known as the "boot" is said to have been originally made from a slip of parchment, which was placed wet on the leg, and which, by its steady, yet sure contraction, inflicted upon the wearer the most excruciating pain. The order of the boot, as bestowed by irate parents and others, is a comparatively modern institution, and forms the greater part of the stock-in-trade of the artist of the up-to-date comic paper.

I will now take a step forward and deal with the boot history of our own shores. In the early days of Britain's history, it can be taken for granted that the bad condition of the roadways of the country inculcated the inhabitants with the necessity of some form of foot-covering. The shoes worn by the Belgic Britons were made of raw cowhide. In Ireland these were called brogues, and though the custom of using such in walking has died out, the people of this strange land still make use of the brogue in conversation. The brogue was worn larger than the foot—in inverse ratio to the custom with the boot nowadays—the space being filled in with hay. Shoes have frequently been dug up in England formed from a simple piece of untanned leather, slit in several places, through which a thong was passed, and which, when sketched inebricated—I mean, drawn tight—fastened it to the foot like a purse.

The task of describing the different forms that boots and shoes have assumed since the displacement of the brogue, would be a larger one than I care to undertake, even if I had the material for the compilation, which I have not. One thing anent all this change I do know, and that is—that the comfort of the wearer has not always been the *desideratum*. There has been a constant jumping from one ridiculous extreme of form to the other: and the most diligent research into the anatomical aspect of the question has failed to provide me with any remarkable instances of similar changes in the formation of the pedal extremities. Henry VIII. is made responsible by historians

not only for an unusual complement of wives, but for the introduction of shoes of disproportionate breadth, in order that he might obtain a good fit for feet that would give fits to anyone æsthetically inclined. All sorts and conditions of ridiculous patterns, one more absurd than the other, culminated in that *reductio ad absurdum*, the shoes with points inches long. It became necessary to curb popular idiocies by imposing fines and other punishments for indulging in boots with toes over two inches in length, and, at another period, for anything over six inches in breadth. In the time of Edward VI., and for some time after, courtiers wore boots that could, did occasion arise, take the place of trousers.

In the golden days of good King Charles, several pretty fashions in shoes originated, embroidered with gold lace and silver thread. The boots of Cromwell's time were



MR. R. GRAHAM.

MR. D. T. MAY.

mostly made of buff Spanish leather. These erred naught upon the side of ugliness, a characteristic of most things during the era of the Commonwealth, though the people were uncommon-wealthy. High heels seemed to have arrived with the second Charles; it is not my good fortune to be able to chronicle their departure. In the reign of George III. boots so high and so large were in vogue, as to necessitate the wearer being lifted in and out of them. The phrase "in his boots" may have had its origin at this period, though its meaning has without doubt since born a different complexion. Perhaps the handsomest boot ever worn, the Hessian, came into fashion during this reign, and was first "made in Germany." After the Hessian—the Wellington. Laced boots were worn by ladies in the time of George IV. I cannot find a record of the appearance of the buttoned boot upon the scene, and cannot therefore place the

responsibility of this fearsome fashion upon anybody's feet. It is as well. His memory would be the reverse of respected by many thousands of young husbands with recollections of sundry lost trains, engagements, and tempers, for which among other things they have been responsible.

It is pretty clear now that not only are boots and shoes of ancient origin, but that the custom of wearing them is thoroughly well established. We owe a good deal, if not to boots and shoes themselves, to the dealers in them: and the description of how they are made into the things that they seem to be, and frequently are, ought to prove interesting. There are in Bristol large tracts of the city devoted to the active propagation of boot and shoe worship. Boot manufacturing in Bristol and district is divided into two distinct classes. Just out of Bristol, at Kingswood, a tremendous trade



CLICKING.

in boot-making has sprung up within the last few years. It is the home of a particular form of boot-making, that of the heavy-nailed specimen. In Bristol itself, the lighter, or what I might term the more middle-class kind of foot-covering, finds many close-quarters. But nearly all the large Bristol boot manufacturers have branch factories at Kingswood, and prominent among these is the firm of Hutchins & May, the house I visited for the purpose of gathering my information upon the subject of modern boot-making. For many reasons I am disposed to congratulate myself—or my advisers—upon the choice of this firm to represent the Bristol boot industry.

This trade has made rapid strides during the last twenty or twenty-five years. The notion which held the field for so many generations that to get a good pair of boots one must be measured for them, is now exploded—gone off completely. Probably

over 20,000 hands are employed in what is really Bristol's staple trade. The perfection of the factory system, with its manifold divisions of labour, has done much to assist its development by placing a useful, neat, well-fitting boot or shoe before the public at a comparatively small cost: and that the public buy them even before trying to obtain possession by other means, is a fact known to all of us who have eyes for such things.

The anatomy of the pedal extremity and the science pertaining thereto has a firm footing in this big shoe-farm. Frequently, the very first thing that strikes a person on attempting a critical examination of the human foot other than his own, is the fist of



PASTING.

the owner. Saving—or as I might say, dodging this, the enormous proportion of bone in the average foot appears to call for most notice. There is a reason for this, of course. But my business is to state facts, not to excuse them. The foot, like the average sermon, is capable of sub-division under three heads: the toes, the waist, and the heel. The number of toes in a foot is frequently a matter of accident—very frequently. The heel is a thing that is always with us, and in spite of its name “what can't be cured,” etc. Then there is the waist: but all have a little leaning that way. Now, given the customary assortment of toes, waist, and heel, the covering of these with leather would appear to be but plain cobblers' work. But is it? Let countless cramped sufferers answer that question if they wish—I can't. For there are some painful feelings that are too deeply felt for words. It

is singular that there should be a wide divergence between the class of boot produced in this city and the district. This is really the outcome and the inlet of forty years of patient plodding. Kingswood and the surrounding villages started the manufacture of these strong hob-nailed boots, and the father has taught his own and other people's boys the trade: and now you hear the hammering consequent upon their production in all directions as you walk through their misty midst: and you notice how abundant are the little workshops. Every cottage appears to possess one, taking the place of flowers and fruit in the little garden devoted to the earning powers of the whole family. Technical

schools have been started for the further perfection of boot manufacturing, which, by the way, are under the tuition of Mr. John May, the manager of Hutchins & May.

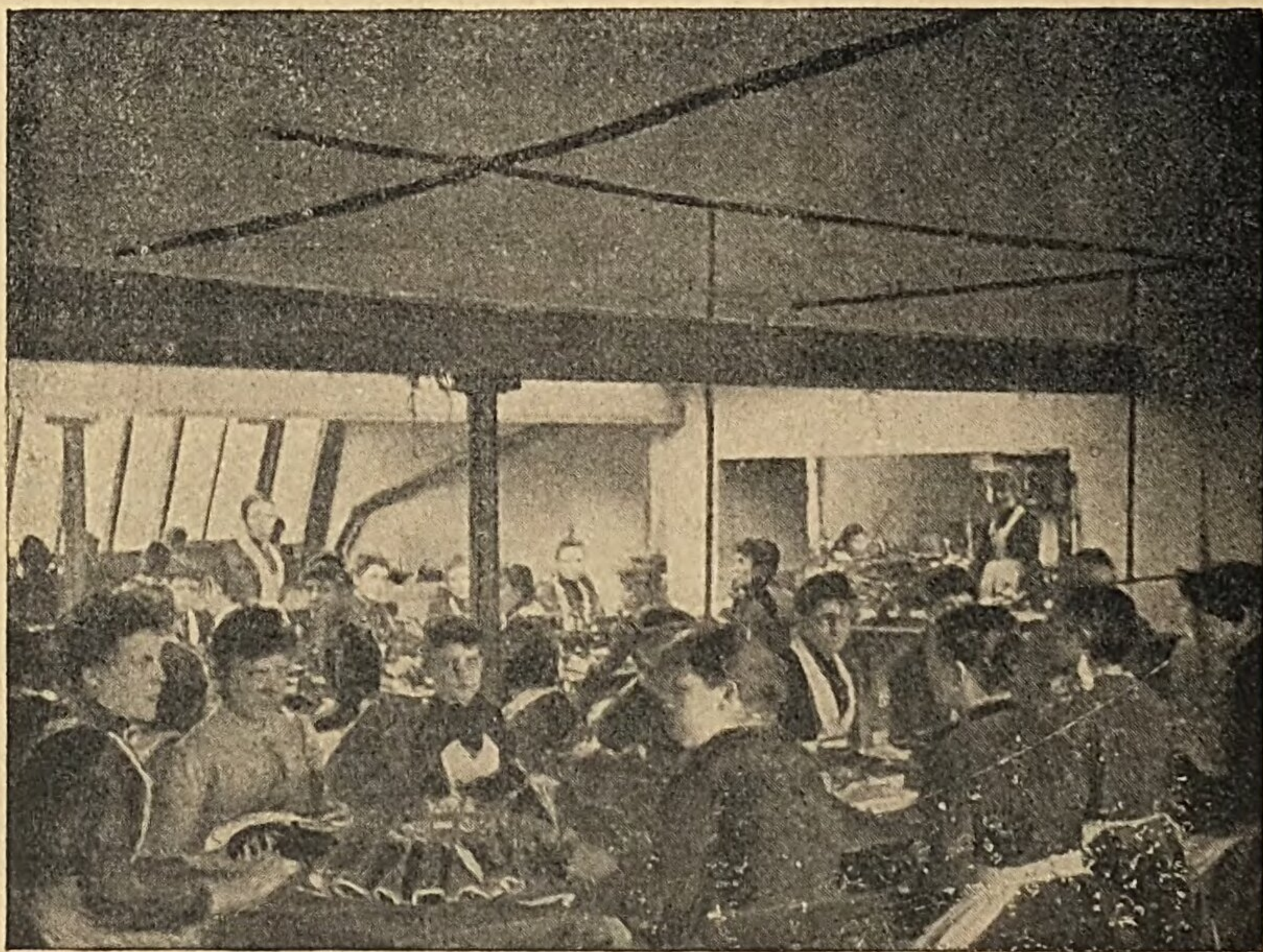
Almost the first thing that engaged my interested attention during my perambulation of this big factory was the care bestowed in the designing of patterns. My guide, the aforementioned Mr. John May, who is brother to one of the principals of the firm, Mr. David T. May, is a great local authority on boots and their manufacture. To him, the processes of foot-apparel construction savours of a science, and, as explained by him, justly so. He maintains that the unsuitability of the boot worn through nearly all the periods of its history, to the foot it has to cover, is due more to the wrong-headed tendency on the part of the wearer—who is ruled in all things by the prevailing senseless fashion—than to any inability on the part of the craftsman to rise to the task set him. Had the royal shoe-



CLOSING.

maker attached to the court of the eighth Henry objected to conform to his royal and much-married patron's opinions on the boot question, the results might have been most confusing,—at all events there is little doubt that the shoe-maker would have lost his head; and, difficult as the statement may be to swallow, breathed his last. But though “setting the fashion” is the domain of the wearer, and complying to the demand, that of the maker, the onus of modifying its evil influences, and not adding to them by un-scientific working and arrangement, rests solely with the latter. And Mr. May, ere he had done with me, testified to the overt desire on the part of his firm to be absolved from any such responsibility. Corns are among the ills that the flesh of the foot is heir to, and are in all cases the results of bad-fitting boots. They are not transmitted hereditarily like noses, family Bibles, and fatherly advice. There are some who hold differently. This ought to unloose their hold.

But to return to my "last," which I must, much as I abhor paradox, deal with first. The "last" is a model of the human foot—a rude model it is true, which is not a nude departure in models. It is the counterpart of the foot for the clothing of which it is intended to be a guide. There are designers who trace on paper the particular pattern they wish the last to assume; this is carved out in wood, and can then be re-produced in metal, which is the form in which it is used in actual shoe manufacturing. The heads of these boot designers must be continually bothered about the condition of other people's soles. For the range of styles produced by this firm include the most diversified types known to the uses of man—which embraces woman. There are the heavy boots for navvies—things of mighty calibre and herculean armament; the collier's speciality, which has only to be seen to open up a perfect mine of conjecture upon this light additional

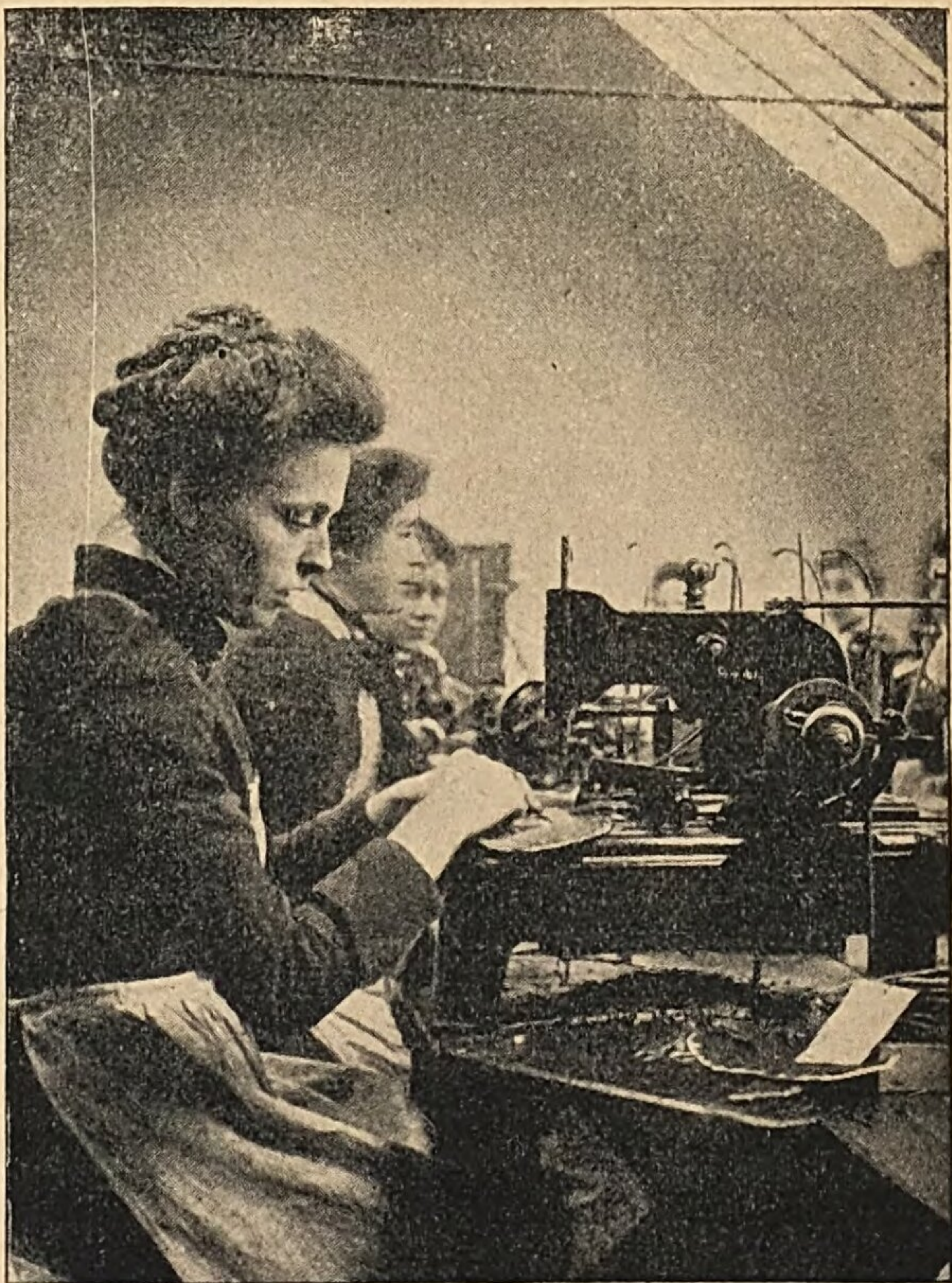


FINISHING.

hardship to his heavy lot; and the iron-worker's, farmer's, and working-man's—who I hope are not walking men—all these contrast with the ordinary boots and shoes of the highly respectable class to which you and I, dear readers, belong.

The patterns of the upper parts of the boot are first cut out in cartridge and then shot in iron—iron-shot, as it were; around these the nimble knives of the "clickers" work. But I will come to that directly. In boot-making as in other things much depends upon the choice of the materials. In a room adjacent to that for designing the patterns, I had pointed out to me many different kinds of leather, all intended to form what is technically termed "uppers." Both in variety and colour their range is legion. These are mostly calf-skins, though the outer-covering of the genuine kid is also well represented here. Except in the cases of very high class and lightly-made boots, the calf-skin always

furnishes the material for boot construction. All sorts and sizes of calves born of cows go to provide the calf-skin of the manufacturer. There is the real unadulterated calf, of moderate and juvenile dimensions (unlike that of the tourist in full walking costume), whose skin is of the requisite substance for the purpose it is intended to serve. But the middle-aged ox and the grandmotherly cow also supply calf-skins, and in the first person. This is due to the cuteness and inventiveness of the Yankee, who has invented machinery yet little understood or appreciated in this old country, which, with a dexterity approaching the marvellous, slits the skins across, not only once, but two and three times, thus supplying from one substantial hide duplicates and triplicates of "calf-skin." And when boots are made by the hundred thousand, and at astoundingly low prices, the advantage of buying two or three skins for one is apparent. Apart from this, all the kids, living and dead—I am referring to the quadrupedal species only—would be inadequate for the supply of "uppers." So some means of providing a sufficiently thin leather other than pure kid was advisable, was in fact an absolute necessity. It appears that we import "kids" in large quantities from Germany, though this, fortunately, is not another pauper-alien question. Persian goats furnish a large supply of these kids. The "moroccos" which come from Paris are also found here, and play a big part in the supply of uppers for certain classes of boots and slippers. Altogether there was about the most miscellaneous assortment of kids one could expect to find under one roof: black kids, yellow kids, and green kids. It is these leathers which make, according to substance and quality, the upper portions of both men's and women's boots.



BUTTON-HOLEING.

The next operation is the cutting-up of the kids, which, much to my surprise, is almost a noiseless proceeding. There is little heard but the *click, click* of the knife of the operator as he skims it round the metal fashion plate, a sound which it is safe to assume gave this feature its name of "clicking." The "clickers" are all experts, their object being not only to get the largest number of complete uppers out of one skin, but to

obtain them in such a way as will ensure the thinnest parts of the skin going to form that portion of the boot whose position demands the least strain upon its wearing-out capacities. The linings, which form a part of a boot or shoe quite as much as they do of a cloud—though they be not necessarily of silver—are also cut up in the same way, as they form duplicates of the upper leather. The linings are intended to strengthen the uppers and increase the comfort of the wearer.

Ready-made boots, like ready-made clothes, are made on a large scale and to a system. The methods employed in one are those employed in the other. There is therefore, in remembrance of a former chapter, no need for me to expatiate upon the course pursued in carrying them out. Enough that all manner of feet can be fitted: the long and the short, the narrow and the wide, the thick and the thin. Ladies' sizes run from two's to eight's: though the last is a purely Irish question, and has scarcely any disciples out of that land of great feats.

The skins having been cut into vamps, quarters, linings, toes, etc., are tied into bundles, and transferred to the fitting and closing department.

They are then "skived." Skiving is an operation done by machinery, and its purpose—to shave obliquely the edges of the upper pieces of leather so that they can be the more easily joined and sewn together. The mechanism employed is clever, and is much more uniform in its results than any hand work could possibly be. These skived edges, which show the inner and natural colour of the leather, are then inked by large numbers of girls—veritable fellow ink-spillers. The closing movement—which has nothing in common with early closing—can then be proceeded with. It consists of sewing the backs and the uppers (*i.e.*, the sides) of the boot together. Seated at long rows of tables, upon which are numerous sewing-machines, in this case of the Wheeler and Wilson persuasion, and which are driven by steam-power, this work is executed at tremendous speed, as will be the more readily believed when I support this opinion by the statement that each machine is capable of sewing 11,000 stitches per minute. If a stitch in time saves nine, what economy must any one of these machines have accomplished in a day's work? Like Hamlet, I pause for a reply.

An interesting appliance I saw at work here is called the Union twin-shuttle machine. As its name denotes, it has two needles, which work simultaneously. It sews the support to the back seam of the uppers, when they are joined together and closed. It works with immense rapidity; the eye cannot follow the process of this stitching.

As we all, even at this early stage, are aware, there are many kinds of boots; the difference in style and construction therefore must cause a similar displacement of the order in which the different operations take place. In describing, therefore, the manner in which a stage in the boots construction is accomplished, I wish it to be understood that the detail, if not the order of my description, is applicable to button, elastic, or other forms of boot, alike. But all boots undergo either all or most of the different operations it is my object to sketch with my pen, as I saw with my eyes. So having placed myself on a level, as it were, with the reader, I will come down to the next process, which consists of paste-fitting.

The pasting is done by girls—and very nice girls too—and consists of covering a portion of the lining which intended to form an integral part of the boot when joined to the upper, with a coagulinous mixture. Now there are several different kinds of paste. There is the variety much in demand by bill-posters; there is the kind which goes to form the principal item of editorial expenditure in the offices of many of the *fin-de-siècle* weekly papers; and then there is tooth-paste. But the paste used by Messrs. Hutchins & May is different to all these, and has good qualities not to be found in any of the varied kinds of paste-ry enumerated and unenumerated. It is made from rye-flour, and is for home consumption only. For their colonial orders the firm use a substitute yclept dextrine. It appears that the change of climate affects rye-flour paste considerably, not to say unpleasantly. There is no need to go into details; it is enough that dextrine knows how to behave itself no matter how far away from home it is despatched, and how warm the climate it is consigned to. The paste is applied to the lining with the second finger of the right hand: this is most important: and is an art which appears easy of acquisition. The linings are thus joined to the uppers, and, unlike frail humanity, are not easily divorced.

The machine rooms of the factory are by far the pleasantest and best lighted—though as far as boot factories go, the appointments throughout this one are excellent. Here all the different finishing touches associated with uppers is pursued. Buttons are sewn on by rows of deft-fingered girls; button-holes are worked by clever machines for the purpose, similar to those I saw in use on my ready-made clothes quest; and the different styles of ornamentation are also worked here. When the lowly upper has done its round of these constantly changing evolutions, it is taken with many others of the same order to be carefully examined, blocked, and put into specified numbered and described bundles, and then sent downstairs, where they meet their fate halfway in the shape of the “bottoms” which have been sent up from below on a similar errand to the serving room. Each bundle of “uppers” is so marked as to show not only size of bottom required, but kind of heels



LASTING.

wanted, style of make necessary, and every other detail requisite to the proper understanding of a well-made and regulated boot or shoe.

Though we have arrived at the "bottoms" it will be as well to go back a bit, and see how the good soles and heels come to have their being. I was guided along many darksome passages, and eventually brought into the noisy recesses of a big underground apartment in which several great pieces of machinery disputed undivided attention with their workers. These are called "ranging machines," and cut up the butts into the necessary pieces for bottom work. The leather is first passed through heavy machine rollers, which compresses it, and gives it greater durability. This takes the place of the old cobblers' lapstone, which would be of little use in these days of mammoth boot factories. Roughly speaking, this leather is cut up into three different forms: the sole, the inner sole, and the heel. This is done by placing the steel cutter, which forms the shape of the heel or sole to be cut, over the leather and under the machine, which does its part of the work neatly, surely, and expeditiously. The cut material is then sorted into quantities—for one hide provides a variety of different classes of cuttings—and are then ready for attachment to the upper. There is one thing I must describe here before getting to and sticking to my last. It is called "channeling." Channeling consists of cutting a groove round the inner edge of the sole to permit of the entrance of the machine-needle for the sewing of the bottom to the upper. I will return to this, that is, cross this channel, later on.

There are more ways than one of attaching bottoms to uppers. Besides sewing, they can be pegged, riveted, and standard-screwed. All of these methods are in use in these factories, and vary according to the class of boot to be attached. If sewing is good for one kind of boot, riveting or standard-screwing is for another. But these are technical points, of little interest to the general reader.

Durability is the virtue most desired in the boot, so good material is of the greatest importance in its manufacture. Running it close in importance are the elements of style, fit, and comfort, and, therefore, the "last" is not the least important instrument in the evolution of the article in question. "Lasting," as its name unintentionally implies, is the beginning of the end in boot-making. It means the marrying of the hitherto two distinct portions of the boot—the making of the upper and the bottom, one. In this department a large number of lasters were at work, the boots worked at being all in different stages of construction. I concentrated my attention on one particular workman who was just starting on an upper, and this is something like what I saw him do.

He placed the upper on the last so that the back part was raised. By driving in small tingles through the ends of the upper, it was affixed to the inner sole with the aid of a pair of pincers; the "laster" drew the upper tightly over the sole, driving home the tingles and making it fast. When this had been completed, the boot was ready for bottom-soleing and heeling.

This brings us to the most wonderful type of machine yet invented in connection with wholesale boot manufacturing. It is called the "Blake." The "Blake" is the machine which sews the bottom to the upper, doing this with enormous rapidity and extraordinary ease, considering the substance and toughness of the material it has to sew through. So

powerful and rapid is this machine, that the particular workman who was superintending the one I examined, informed me that he had recently succeeded in sewing 941⁷/₈ pairs in a working day of 10 hours. The Standard Screwer is another wonderful machine. It forms perhaps one of the most permanent advances ever made in boot-making machinery. Instead of sewing, the "screwer," as its name denotes, actually screws the work together—perhaps the strongest possible means of uniting the two parts. The screw is of brass and is cut from a coil of wire supplied to the machine. It is mostly employed in what is termed strong work—*i.e.*, work made from stout materials.

The boot, although it has not suffered much in what it has gone through, requires to be heeled ere it can be considered a completed thing. The question of heels, their uses and abuses, has always been a vexed one. That the heel has a distinct use, I am prepared



SOME OF THE EMPLOYÉS.

to admit. That it is distinctly abused, I am certain. But however that may be—and it is debatable ground—heels have an existence, an existence which must be recognized by me, at all events. The heel is formed from a number of thin strips of leather cut to shape individually, but broader at the top than at the bottom. These are fixed in the easiest manner to the boot by machinery, which drives several powerful nails right through the whole of the different layers, transfixing all and affixing them to the boot. Machinery is also responsible for putting a fine finish on the heel, which is done by allowing swiftly revolving cutters to shave its rough outer edges judiciously, smoothly, and evenly. The boot is now beginning to bear a resemblance unto the finished article. But it is not yet. The finishing is a process all to itself.

As in racing, there are all kinds of finishes. Some are much closer and finer than others. A man's boot is soon finished, but that for the woman requires much

embellishment. But as long as a boot be well finished, it matters little as to what style the operative has assumed. This includes the black-polishing and burnishing of the sole-edges and heels, the sand-papering of the waist, and other diversified minute details, nearly all of them being accomplished in this factory by the aid of ingenious machinery. The boot or shoe may now be considered *un fait accompli*, and there is now little else to be done with it, other than selling it and wearing it out. In due course these things are managed also. But before it leaves the factory it is boxed, a harmless pugilistic operation. As it is evidently not well that a boot should be boxed alone, it is boxed in couples, one for the right foot, the other for the left. This boxing is a big department of the business, as would be expected in so large a concern; the packing also has several large rooms allotted to its uses. The goods made for the firm's big export trade undergo a climatic tempering beforehand. They have two separate heatings, one before lasting, the other before packing. The heating or drying rooms are kept at 120 degrees: and the most tropically intended boot won't experience much worse than this when it reaches its destination.

I have now seen the last of my boot, and can spare a little time for moralising. There is room for that in boot manufacture as in most things. I was much impressed with the ability displayed in making foot-covering on an extensive scale, as represented by this one of many manufacturers who make Bristol and district their home. Both in regard to the number of hands employed and its general importance, boot manufacture is the greatest industry in the west of England. But it is not by any means as great as it might be. Manufacturers have not all shown the same desire to merit an increasing trade as they might have done, and more, perhaps, than in any other Bristol industry, have cared least for exploiting the great foreign and colonial markets. Hutchins & May have few companions in trade whose name and trade-mark find ready recognition in far distant lands, the inhabitants of which are all desirous of covering the nakedness of their feet, and cannot manufacture the means. It is not my province to lecture—rather that of being lectured—but if Bristol boot manufacturers, collectively, would rise on a level with the enterprising times they work in, and consider that the wants of one people in boots and shoes may be greatly dissimilar in style and material from those of another, they would keep much good business that is going from them, and obtain even more that will otherwise never come their way. It is not enough to be old-established and reputable. A firm which considers its mission to be that of running in the grooves its long-time promoters carved, and of resting on the means they made and left, and considers respectable mediocrity the *ultima thule* of its trading position in the commercial community, is wrong—sinfully, and egregiously in error. Such as these are but the stumbling-blocks to a general prosperity, and should clear out of a sphere in which they originate nothing and accomplish almost less, to make way for more worthy competitors with our pushing, energetic, competitive business rivals, American and Continental.

I found in the firm I have been describing courteous and genial helpers. I desired to see how boots and shoes were properly made, and they took every care that I should do so. The promise of (Hutchins &) May was fulfilled. I thank them. As a firm, this boasts little of the hoary antiquity due to most large Bristol manufacturers. It is the new blood of the boot trade. In one respect it belies its name, for there is no Mr.

Hutchins to be the winter of Mr. May's discontent. John Hutchins, who established the business in 1869, retired from active service in 1882. Mr. D. T. May then took unto himself a partner in the person of Mr. Robert Graham, a gentleman possessed of a merry wit and much business ability. There is a branch factory also at Hanham; but when increasing business necessitated it, the most modern fitted building in the local boot trade was erected by the firm at Staple-hill—which is Kingswood way.

ON TANNING.

THERE is nothing like leather. Unless, peradventure, it be a railway refreshment-room beef-steak. Brown paper has before now been made to assume the virtuous qualities of leather, though it possessed them not. But all to little practical and much less humanitarian purpose. Every man has done something in the leather way, even though it consisted merely of wearing-out his quota. And if he was anything but an abstaining tea-drinker, has also done a little tanning on his own account. But of all these, only a small proportion possess other than a fragmentary understanding of the why and the wherefore of leather in its finished and most endurable form. Leather as we understand it, know it, and wear it out, is not a thing of natural growth. In common with most other people I have been, until recently, under the impression that it was. So I am writing as much for the enlightenment of the unenlightened, as for the display of my own newly-acquired knowledge of the mysteries of leather and how it becomes so.

In the chapter "On Clothes" I did my best to show how the primæval man utilised the skins of the animals he slew in the hunt, for the purpose of covering. Warmth more than ornament may have been responsible for this, or mayhap both in an equal degree. But this incident would form the first chain in the link which binds man to an acquaintance with the uses the skins of animals could be put to. No doubt the art of tanning imperceptibly grew out of the necessities of the case, for mere dried skin is anything but leather. The process of tanning is as indispensable to the manufacture of leather as the hides themselves. Tanning is, in fact, the turning of skins into leather. As a business, its establishment is lost in the forgotten periods of an incalculably far-distant past. And of all industries time has wrought the least changes with this. Distance of time has lent but little enchantment to the tanner's views of things. The tanning of to-day is in little if in aught, different in its essential processes to that of a thousand years ago. Neither machinery nor any prevailing scientific acquirement has succeeded in displacing the simple, time-proved, slow-and-sure methods employed to-day in our most reputable tanneries.

The city of Bristol has had a connection with tanning right through the dim period of its hoary industrial history. Without doubt its first-class position as a second-class port; its associations with the great boot industry of the district; and its proximity to the Forest of Dean and the oak-clad woods on the banks of the Wye, which provides an abundant supply of that tanning essential—oak bark, all went to establish its claims

to be considered the tanner's beau-ideal happy hunting ground. This being indisputably so, my work in Bristol necessitated a visit to a tannery, and that visited was the Avonside Tannery, the scene of the operations carried on by the firm of Evans & Co., Limited.

When we consider the position in Bristol held by the tanners, an amazing contrast is afforded by the peep into the past which the social condition of the tanner of earlier times affords. Much like his companion in misfortune—the tailor, the tanner of mediævality was a despised being, the object of special restrictions and pass-by laws. No one cared a sixpence for a tanner in those days. There is little doubt that the other most famous tannery visit of which we have authentic knowledge, was paid by the apostle Peter at Joppa, as a striking reproof to the spirit of anti-equality with the tanner, existing at that period. Simon, strange to say, is almost the only member of his apron rendered famous in history. There is a somewhat mythical account of the tanner ancestry of William the Conqueror, the extreme antiquity of which is a sufficient excuse for its probable improbability. There is somewhat more authority for the statement that President Grant was a tanner; but nevertheless it is most singular that so ancient and useful an occupation should have supplied so few followers worthy of more than passing note in the chronicles of fame. I have, however, come across one instance in which a tanner was for a time the companion of a king. It is related that Edward IV. was hunting in Drayton Bassett, when a tanner met him. The tanner took the king for a highwayman, and they eventually swapped horses. My authority goes on to state that the king gave this tanner the Manor of Plumpton Park, which he occupied as though he was to the manner born.

The huge tannery of Messrs. Evans is adjacent to the stream which gives it its name. On its rear side it is bounded by the straight and curved railway lines of the local joint railways. On another, it is flanked by a row of cottages, gardens, and greenhouses, which are occupied by head employés of the firm, for whom they were built. The bulk of the large sheds in which the hides undergo their tanning evolutionary courses, are of comparatively modern erection. Modern, that is, if we take into account the period of this firm's operations.

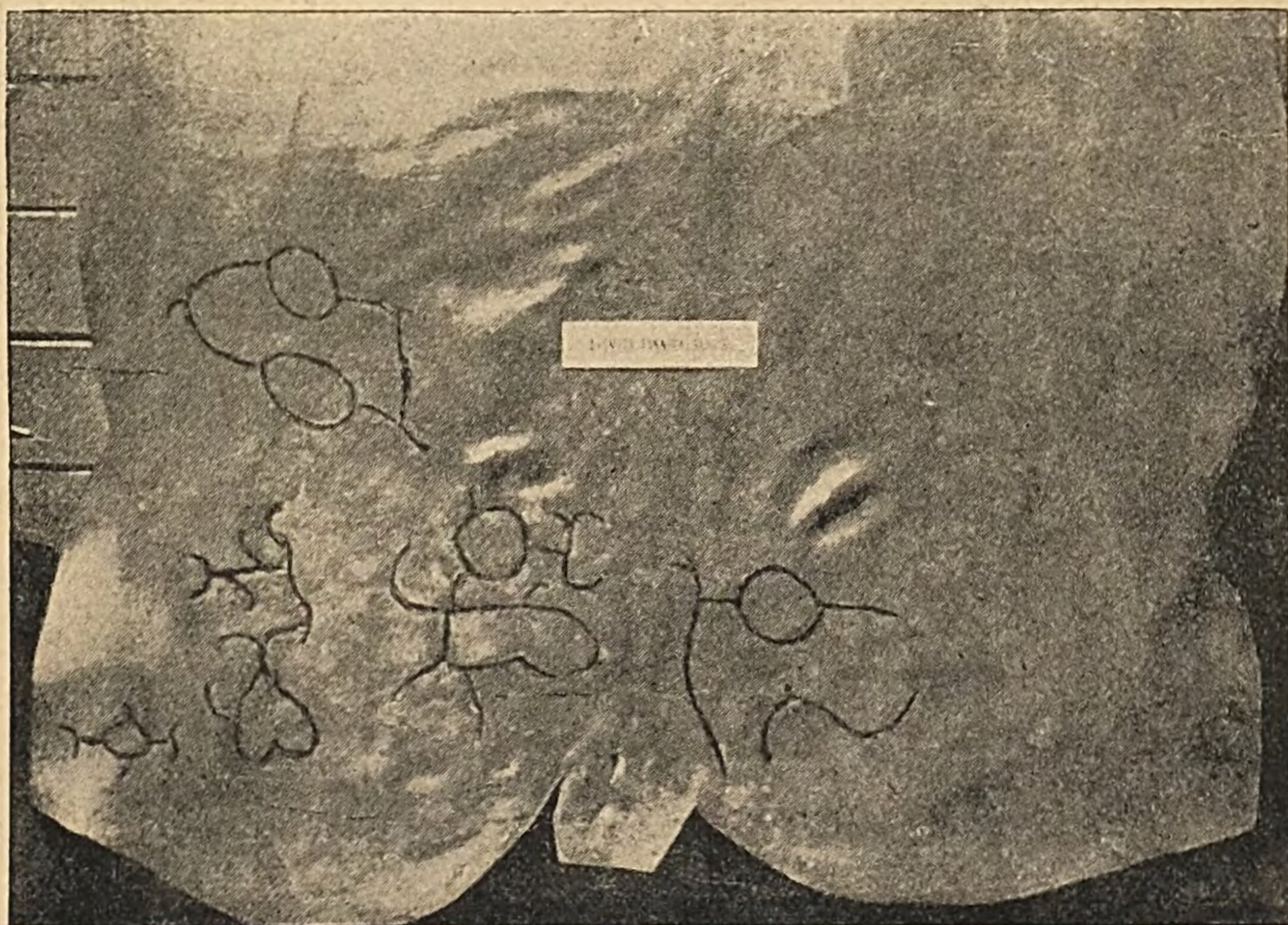
To the poetic temperament of the writer, the first view of a tannery and the things connected therein were of necessity uninspiring. The effects of acclimatisation are nowhere more strikingly, more pungently demonstrated, than in the tannery. For if I may judge of all other tanneries by this one, next to living in the country, life in a tannery must present the most healthful conditions. For without exception, these workers among hides are among the best physical examples of healthy labourers I have ever encountered. Brawny, well-set, active, tanned, and bearded, the employés of the Avonside Tannery are veritable princes of Demos. But I can adduce more than the oft-questioned authority of the proof of my own eyes in support of this tanyard-*cum*-octogenarian theory. The hands employed here have all an association with this particular tannery ranging from fifteen to eighteen years in duration; and every succeeding year will add further striking figures to this list. The wholesome nature of this indoor occupation receives even more convincing testimony from the records of the great plague of London, which states that

the citizens flocked to the tanyards in Bermondsey to escape contagion. And what says the divine Williams, that great authority on everything, on, under, and over the face of the earth?—"How long will a man lie i'th' earth ere he rot?" enquired Hamlet of the gravedigger.—"I faith," replied he of the spade, "if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year, or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year."—"Why he, more than another?"—"Why sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while." Personally, it is only just that I should state that during the whole period of my visit to the establishment of Messrs. Evans, I enjoyed the most perfect health.

I was first introduced to the mighty stores of hides waiting their turn for leather-making. As I gazed upon these neatly-folded square bundles, each representing the warm out-door covering of some free-as-air plain-roaming quadrupedal denizens of the South American ranches, I could not help ruminating upon the futility of all quadrupedal hopes. Once a free-born beast; now mere skin, without even a particle of bone to complete the sentence. The word hide has always had an attraction for me. Like most people who have not forgotten that they were once boys, I have a lively recollection of that past period of my history when I was particularly well acquainted with the word in its most common-noun-form ending in *ing* type. In my well-known character of a hide-and-seeker after knowledge, the sight of this tier upon tier of silent skins caused me to drop a silent tear upon the nearest tier of skins, at the thought of what I must undergo ere I had followed the hide through its liquor-imbibing courses. For despite the sober associations of this staid old business, every hide in the place must have its skinful of liquor, must in fact soak in liquor for months and months ere it is considered steady enough to go round the world a worthy representative of the very finest English leather. But I am not taking the bull by the horns, I am afraid, in dealing at this early period with this particular department. I will retrace my metaphorical footsteps, and, continuing the metaphor, must take my readers a few thousand miles away from the Avonside Tannery for a few moments, and before dressing his skin, first catch my ox.

Nearly all these skins come from the great South American Saladeros. It does not require much experience with the subject to understand that the hides of tame and carefully-reared oxen are thinner than those of wild cattle. Civilisation has given men clothes: and the result has been to demonstrate how much more thin-skinned the clothes-wearer has become in comparison with the naked savage. What is so with man is doubly so with beast. The cattle of the South American Pampas have the thickest hides; and as Messrs. Evans tan only what is called thick sole leather, these imported hides form the main substance of their working material. The enormous business done in hides is a subject requiring solid treatment, for it is of an anything but skin-deep nature. The great prairies of the River Plate and the Brazils simply téam with herds of cattle. Large tracts of country are divided into what are called Estancias, which vary from two to ten square leagues in extent, all round. These abound in coarse grass, and it is in these and upon this that the mighty millions of hornéd cattle are kept and fed. The price of one of these animals in the second place, is from sixteen to twenty-five shillings. They cost very little to raise in the first place, as I will show.

Upon the rear portions of these hides I noticed strange hieroglyphic scars, which, I was informed, were the brand marks of the ranch owners. In countries like South America, where cattle are as numerous and as little considered as mosquitoes, the establishment of ownership consists of branding the stamp of the bi-pedal beast upon the skin of the quadrupedal one. This is done with a hot iron, and makes its mark. As the animal grows this mark grows with it. But this is unfortunately not all. Several changes of ownership, in the ordinary course of barter, may take place ere the marked animal finds its way to the *saladero*, or slaughter-house. Each fresh owner supplies a brand-new mark to the unfortunate animal's skin, in many cases as much as seven distinct brands being bought with one hide. These brands are placed on the rump of the animal, so as to present a conspicuous mark to the *gauchos*, who follow the flying herds on horseback. As this is the



BRAND MARKS.

thickest part of the animal's skin, and as the portion branded is almost useless for ordinary purposes, the loss entailed by this senseless and defenceless custom upon the buyers of hides is enormous. Mr. Sparke Evans has computed that the approximate loss to all concerned by branding, is about £500,000 sterling, annually. It is due to the personal interposition of this firm that the custom is not now carried on with the same reckless indifference as to place and number as formerly. But surely it should not be beyond the powers of the great *estancieros* of the prairies, to set about establishing a perfect reform upon this literally burning question! Why should not the cattle be branded upon the hind leg, where the effect upon the hide, though not perhaps upon the feelings of the treated animal, would be of a comparatively insignificant nature? And one brand should be reckoned the limit of the artificial marks of any one animal. If some such common-sense and mutually beneficial

order of things was established, and, in the case of certain *saladeros*, greater attention was given to the flaying, by giving a bonus to the expert flayers and extracting a fine from the inferior or careless ones, the millennium of the tanning world would be within much more measurable distance than it now is. It is never too late to reform, and in this case it is not too early to begin; for there are still a small matter of 30,000,000 or so of cattle in the equatorial prairies to be branded and flayed.

As would be expected, the retailing of the tale of slaughter of such great numbers of animals, is of a wholesale character. In the beginning of the year the cattle are collected and driven in huge droves to the *saladeros*. As the animal cannot be flayed alive, and as his skin is wanted, there is much to be said in favour of the system of killing in use there. It is without doubt a great advance upon that pursued at home, which combines the

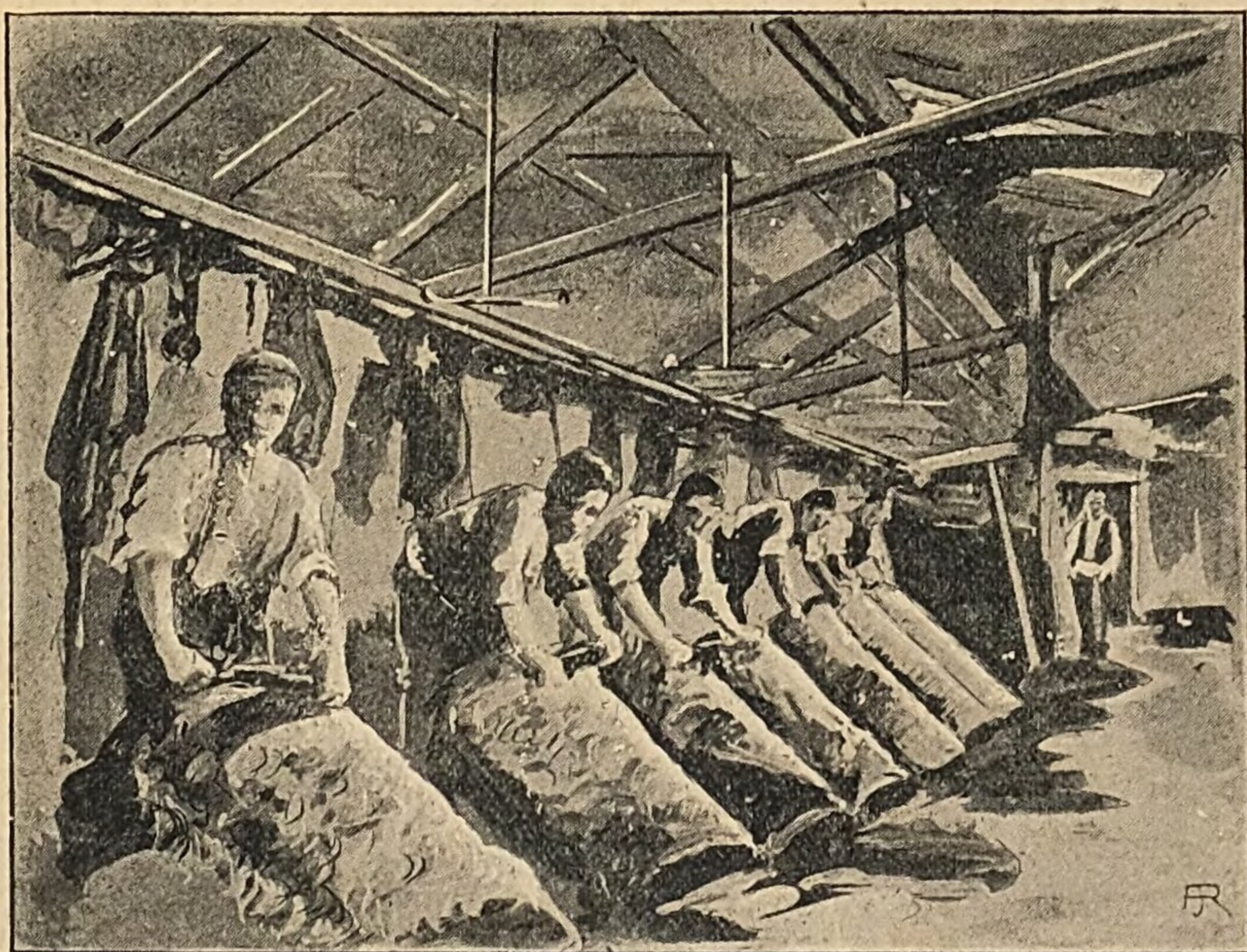


LIME PITS.

maximum of brutality with the minimum of humanity. At the *saladeros*, the animal is rapidly despoiled of life by means of a stab expertly struck at the back of the neck, near the horns, which severs the spinal cord. The body is then removed from the hide by two men, within a space of five minutes. Once upon a time, before the existence of refrigerators and extract-of-meat companies, most of the meat was so much waste, and was treated as such. Now all is changed. Meat, fat, bones, hoofs, horns, and hair have all been found to possess profitable uses, and are exported as a practical and remunerative proof of this discovery. But I must not lose sight of my hides. These are to be carefully preserved for exportation, so they are put in pickle so to speak, for about two weeks, and are then laid in piles for some days. They are then shipped, the process of pickling being continued, as the skins are laid out flat in the hold in layers,

salt being plentifully strewn between each layer. If properly cured, there is no fear of a relapse on the voyage. But unfortunately there is room here for a little trickery, and water—it is true, salt water—is added to the bulk, and frequently brings 6d. or 7d. a pound from the unfortunate buyer of skins, who has not to pay as much as that even if he be a customer of one of our London water companies. As far as Bristol is concerned it is certainly not worth the tanners' while to import his water at that price, in the shape of over-weighted hides. These skinfuls certainly ought to be taken neat.

Formerly, London was the port *par excellence* for the importation of hides. But this is being rapidly and seriously altered. The excessive charges associated with the warehousing, brokerage, and factoring, etc., in the metropolis, is driving the trade



UNHAIRING.

in hides out of England, and Antwerp is considered by English buyers of hides to be the only place worth the visiting when on buying bent. However, that is a big question of ways and means, requiring lengthier treatment than I can afford it here. So having imported my hide, as it were, and brought it safely to Bristol, I will now trace its rakish progress through the Avonside Tannery, to emerge with it at the other end of the great yard, the tired companion of an impermeable, almost indestructible piece of leather.

This is not strictly possible though. For if I stuck to that hide, the same hide, from the time it was put into work to the time it was the leather fit to be sent out, I should have been an inmate of the Avonside Tannery for a period of twelve, perhaps fifteen, months. This might be a good thing for journalism. It might be even the

best possible thing for me; but, as I hinted, at present its disadvantages appear to outweigh its good points.

The hides are unfolded, and are freed from all traces of their briny associations by a liberal soaking in water. This is done by throwing the hides into pits containing water. The building at the Avonside Tannery in which these pits are, is of tremendous size, necessitating in its inspection great walking powers, and a practical test of the quality of the material I was wearing, with that I was seeing made. The skins of Mammalia consist of two layers, the upper containing colouring matter and the root of the hair, and is cellular in construction. The under part is thicker and of a fibrous character. In the preparation of leather, the object of tanners is, in the first place, to remove the hair, and in the second place, to bring about such a change in the under layer as shall prevent it from



ROUNDING THE HIDE.

putrefying in moist air, and at the same time render it impervious to moisture, without, however, depriving the substance of its tenacity and suppleness. Tanning, therefore, resolves itself into two operations—that of removing the hair and cleansing the skin, and of then turning the whole into leather. I will endeavour to show how this is done.

I left my *par exemple* hide soaking in the water-pit. When the salt brought over with it has been sufficiently eliminated, it is taken to another pit which contains more water, but also a plentiful admixture of lime, which separates the hair from the hide. This huge lime-yard is filled with these pits, and I had to use the greatest possible care in my explorings in case this unusual hair-removing fate was mine. I never felt a stronger desire to keep my hair on than I did here. The hide, when removed from the lime-pit, is given over to one of a number of men, who certainly deserve their technical name of

“unhairers.” These men all wear “cuffs,” which are really gloves made from strong leather, and which protect the hands from the much-be-limed material they have to manipulate. To get the hair off the hide, it is thrown across a beam, an oval slanting species of table made of wood and covered with zinc. Having done this, the operatives scrape away with a sort of two-handled blunt knife, which removes the hair with great rapidity and ease. All this savoured of shaving on a truly mighty scale. The hair so removed is of little service now. It is used to make flannel blankets by the same species of constituted persons who sole boots with brown paper, or, what is almost worse, half-tanned leather.

This over, the hides are again subjected to the cold water cure, and are then passed over the way to another long row of workers, who operate on the other side of the skin



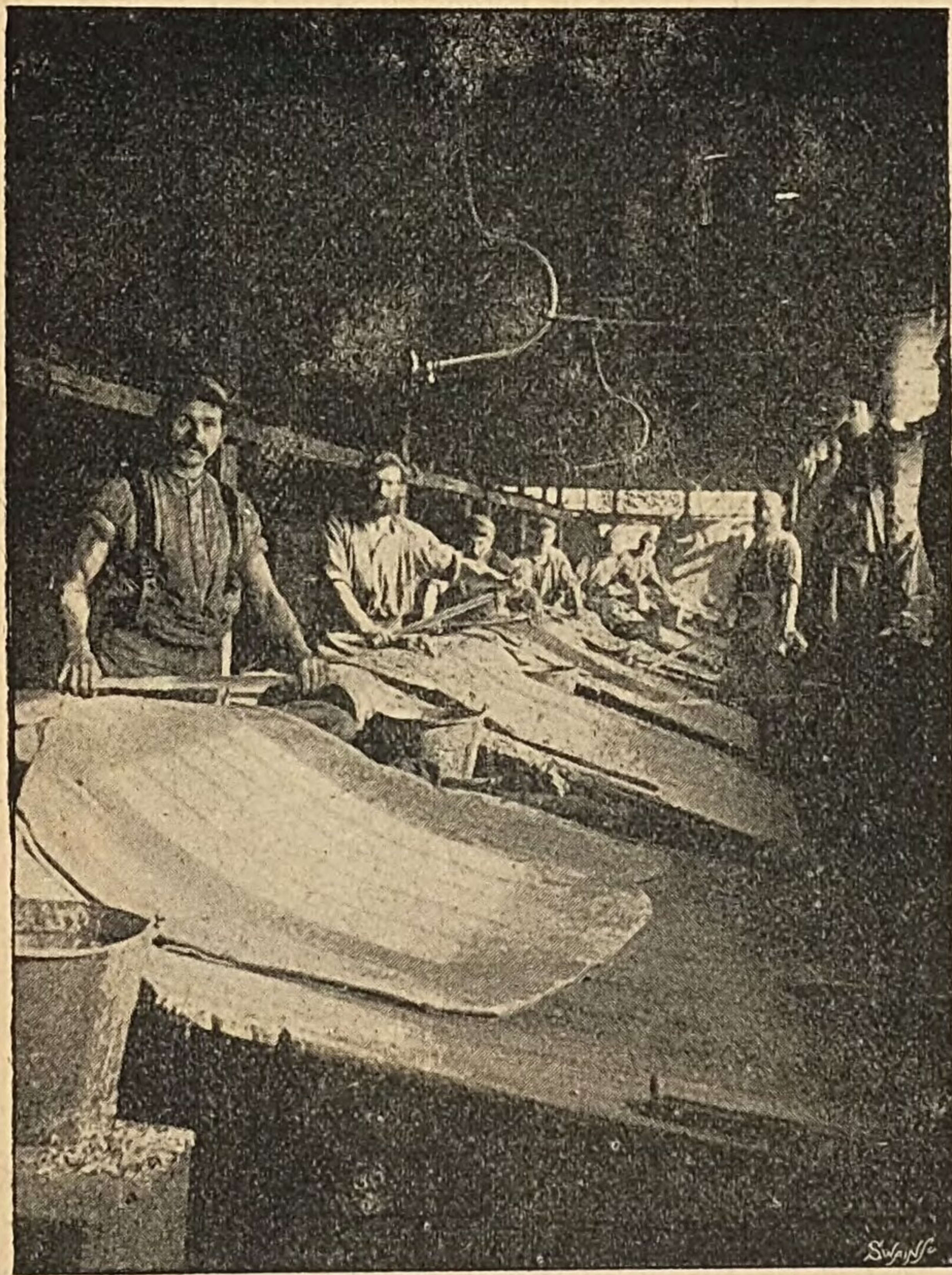
TANNING PITS.

with huge double-handled knives. This operation, called “fleshing,” requires great dexterity and much practice. It consists of removing the fleshy under portion of the skin with all the offal that may adhere to it since its severance from the animal’s body, this being accomplished without any injury to the hide itself. Any divergence from the extremest accuracy in this, and the skin is injured. To understand how this most difficult task is done so successfully requires an ocular demonstration, which I unfortunately am unable to provide.

The hide has now a cleanly, smooth, and polished surface. It is cut into shape, which means that it is “rounded” into the familiar form of the leather “butt.” This consists of cutting away the sides of the skin, which form what is known as the belly, and which is much thinner than the upper part. These are tanned separately, their difference in

substance calling for a much shorter period of treatment in the tan-yards than in the case of the butts. But the difference is purely one of time, and the description of the methods of tanning as applied to the one, is correct as descriptive of the other. They are then again soaked in water.

The process known as tanning—for what I have been describing hitherto are but the initiatory and preparatory stages—now commences. This is purely a chemical process, consisting of permeating the hide with an astringent whose qualities assist in turning the gelatinous fibres of the skin into leather. This necessarily, if it is done effectually, takes a long time, as the natural process of soaking is the only one attended without risk. The



STRIKING THE BUTT.

many attempts that have been made to force the operation of tanning, by compulsorily driving the tanning liquor through the pelt for instance, only injures it, as it distorts the fibres. It appears, therefore, with the experience of centuries to guide us, that it is impossible to make good leather by any but the slowest process. It really resolves itself into a matter of price after all; for a firm which has to lock enormous capital in these tan pits for twelve or fifteen months, is not in the same position to supply leather at the same price as the tanner who contents himself, and presumably his clients, with a material which has only taken half or quarter the time to make leather of. And the evil results of this sham-leather which unscrupulous contractors at one time, and the craze for cheapness in our own, have flooded the market with, are too great and too far-reaching in their scope

for individual tabulation. It is well known that the failure of the French troops to march quickly during the last war with Germany, was due to the wretched material of which their boots were constructed, and which failed to wear through a week's marching. And Bristol itself would not be equal to the task of supplying half a million of fresh pairs of boots weekly, in time of war. Then we English have cause to remember certain shocking rascality in the boot-contracting way, during the Crimean war; but out of this great evil

came a great deal of good, for since the investigation caused by that dreadful episode of "shoddy," no army in the world has been better shod than ours. It is easy to deduce from all this, that a great portion of the leather used for Government purposes is produced at the Avonside Tannery. Some of the old laws relating to the leather trades provided for the infliction of penalties on tanners and curriers who made and sold inferior leather. But at no time has so much of the leather sold been of such a bad quality or made so quickly, as the present.

Now, having had my little digression—taken a breath as it were—I will hie back to the tan-yard. This is a building sheltering hundreds of deep vats containing a deep brown liquid, and in which thousands of butts are undergoing their long lasting treatment. I was sorry to see how very much in liquor everything in these pits was. This constitutes the actual tanning. It is therefore fitting that I should analyse the liquid constituent, and see what gives it its strange and useful qualities.

The materials used for tanning are mostly oak-bark and valonea. Formerly, only the first of these articles was used by English tanners, but the consumption became so great, that the supply was inadequate to the demand, and the price accordingly became prohibitive. Luckily, valonea, the fruit of the wild oak trees which grow so abundantly in Asia Minor, came to the rescue. There is little to differentiate this species of acorn from that of the English oak, but its tanning composition is stronger. At Messrs. Evans', I saw the mightiest heap of these acorn-cups I am ever likely to gaze upon in my time. These are all ground upon the premises in great mills, which I also inspected. Mixed with water and other tanning constituents, such as mimosa bark—which is not much worse than its bite as far as taste goes—it passes through an intricate course of preparation ere it is sufficiently strong liquor for use in tanning. The ground valonea and bark is put into great vats, into which water is poured. It soaks through the mass, drawing out much of the quality of the tanning material in the process. The liquid is then pumped out and poured into another fresh vat, through which it permeates. This process is repeated several times, and is known as "pumping the round," until the liquor obtained is of sufficient strength, and is then fit to be transferred to the pits in the tan-yard.

As I said, valonea comes nearly in its entirety from Turkey and Asia Minor; but it is probable that it could be grown both prodigally and profitably in Australia, greatly to the benefit of everyone, for the Turk does nothing that is likely to be of service to this particular industry. Valonea is brought to the coast on the backs of camels, whence it is shipped in great quantities to England.

And now I must return to the tan-yard. Here are the numerous pits, as I have already said, each containing liquor, but not all of the same strength. The butts have to go a round of pits, beginning weak and rising in the scale of strength as they proceed, until they have passed in, remained in, and passed out of, a succession of different vats. It is to this process that what in these days of lightning manufacture would be considered the very slow operation of tanning, is due. They remain there until the centre fibres of the skin are of the same tint and texture as the outermost. The men who shift the hides out of the different pits into fresh ones are called "handlers," and effect their object with long hooked poles, by which they grasp the butt on each side and throw them in or out with

great dexterity. The butts are undoubtedly well handled, so if there is much virtue in an "if" what shall be said of the good qualities of a "butt."

About twelve months have been occupied in bringing the hide up to the stage in which I have just in spirit—or I might say, in liquor—left it. They have now to be thoroughly dried before they can be dressed, a course of procedure many men would be the better by the adoption. The butts are put across wood tressels and allowed to drain—though one would think that their long suspension in liquor would have made anything like that superfluous. They are then hoisted up to the topmost story of the great building, and hung on poles, where they are allowed to dry at their leisure and the firm's convenience. This drying has to be carefully regulated in order that the outer parts may not dry too quickly, and thus spoil the grain of the leather.



ROLLING THE BUTT.

The next process is evidently of an unpleasant nature, for it consists of putting the butts into a temper. As this is done before they are what is technically termed "struck," I'm inclined to think that perhaps it is in a good temper they are put. Though it literally goes against my grain to admit this. However that may be, I will describe the process.

The butts are thrown across a beam, and they are tempered, not with kindness, but with a tool which resembles a two-handled three-cornered rolling-pin more than anything I know of. It is the duty of the men using these strange instruments to give the upper portion of the butt a glossy, smooth appearance. This is done by the incessant use of the triangular rolling pin, an intermittent laving with water, and the expenditure of much muscular exertion. This removes the indentations, and puts a new complexion on things. Much the same process is applied to the other side of the butts by a different relay of

workpeople. All this is called "striking the butt," but it is really like the recent famine in Russia, a grain question.

After these finishing processes, the end, as is proper it should, draws near. But before the butt is fit to represent the Avonside Tannery in the leather world, it has to perform yet another round of its evolutionary career. It has to receive two distinct and separate rollings. Now, there are two ways of doing most things, and rolling is one of them. There is machine rolling, and there is hand rolling. It will have been apparent all through how small a part is played in this great tannery by what is euphoniously termed, machinery. And even now that we have come to an actual process in which a mechanical contrivance can be used, we find that not only is it duplicated by hand labour, but that of the two the latter is the better and the most used. This rolling not only flattens out the butt but adds polish to the surface. Now a butt is like a Bristol street, of an uneven character; it is thinner in some parts than in others. The machine roller has no thought of these things, and rolls the same over thick and thin, rough and smooth, flat or lumpy. Consequently, the hand-rollers are utilised for the best work. To deal with one thing at a time, the hand-roller lays a butt on the rolling stand—which is a smooth flat bed of metal—and goes over it repeatedly with a heavy portable roller, until the desired evenness is obtained. It is a long job, and one operator I watched seemed to roll on much as the ocean does, without coming to an end.

And now, last scene but one of all, as far as the butts are concerned. These are now carried into the numerous large store rooms, where they are stored and dried at the same time. They have been separated into two shapes, the whole butt, and what I might in billiard phraseology term—the half-butt, or "bend." This is really, as the improvised title denotes, half a butt, the whole butt having been cut down the back for the purpose. Even this, difficult operation though it is, and applied to many thousands of hides, is done by hand. In this form it is most appreciated by North of England buyers, where the trade believe they save a good deal in the cutting. I am not able to go into the ethics of this question.

The leather—for it is leather now, and that of the finest quality made—has been stamped twice on the grain side with the gold-medal trade-mark of the firm, which consists of a double E surmounting a pair of horns. When it is completely dried and seasoned, it is taken into the sorting and baling room: through which more than a thousand butts are passed weekly, and where they have to undergo a careful examination by a member of the firm. Here they are sorted and classed according to weight and substance, great care being used in the selection. They are then lowered from here into the carts which take them away, the leather having made a complete circuit of the whole premises since its arrival in the same spot in the shape of hides. And large as Messrs. Evans' tannery undoubtedly is, fifteen months is a long time to take on the journey.

In the sorting room there was hung up the hide of a calf-hippopotamus which had taken four years' tanning. Next to it was an elephant's ear, which is the only piece of skin known to possess a grain on both sides. Both these little matters have histories, but so it happens has Bristol, and the proper treatment of the latter has evidently taxed my descriptive powers. So I will leave both tempting morsels, and deal with those other

portions of animal hide which do not form the butt—either for ridicule or purposes of merchandise.

One of the sheds into which I was taken contained almost endless rows of gnarled and twisted gelatinous semi-white material, in the process of being dried. These are really the head and tail pieces of the skins which are cut away by the “rounders.” They are no use as leather, so they are dried without other than the preliminary stages of cleansing treatment, and go to make, among other things, calf’s-foot jelly, gelatine lozenges, portable soups, and such like dainties. I made use of a most original statement at the very commencement of this article to the effect that there was nothing like leather. Surely this goes far to prove it!

There is one matter I should like to make passing comment upon, though it has more to



EMPLOYÉES AT AVONSIDE TANNERY.

do with tanning than leather. I have shown that there is little waste nowadays associated with tanning. I have just discussed the strange uses to which the head-pieces are put: the hair, as I have said, has also its purpose, and from the flesh and such similar matter that is taken from the hide by the “flesher,” the ordinary “size” is made. But there is one thing which, though it is waste unfortunately in the most literal application of the term at present, should most certainly not be. I refer to the partially spent lime. Now this material contains a mixture of salt, blood, lime and gelatine. It consequently possesses about the finest qualities for artificial manure ever devised. The fact that it is not extensively used for agricultural purposes only goes to show what a tremendous amount of ignorance is the lot of the agriculturist, or speaks more strongly of his aversion to change or experiment of any kind. The firm also do everything in their power to turn their spent tan

into clean, portable manure. After it has served its purpose in the tannery, it is thrown into a species of furnace-oven, in which it is burnt to ashes, and when cool, presents a beautiful powdery appearance, suitable for agricultural purposes. And this splendid material can be had for the taking away! It is a strange world, my masters, and men know not sometimes what they do, or how much more they fail to accomplish.

I have dealt, I hope adequately, with the process of tanning as followed by a most representative Bristol firm. The managing partners are Mr. Sparke Evans, who is a Justice of the Peace for Bristol, and his brother, Mr. Jonathan Evans. They in turn are assisted by their sons. The firm is a private limited company, and is in a much-to-be-envied position with regard to the feeling existing between themselves and their work-people, in whose wants they take an active interest, and over whose welfare they appear to exercise an assiduous personal care.

“*Great is the leather of the Bristolians!*” I may well exclaim. From calf’s-foot jelly to boots—through a multitude of intervening useful purposes such as have much surprised even so great a discoverer as the writer—in all these does the skin of the beast show the cloven hoof. If Pope had lived in our day, a certain much-quoted couplet might most reasonably have run as follows :—

Worth makes the man—and dresses for his lady.
And all the rest is leather—or something shady.

ON CORSETS.

ONE of the main-stays of Bristol's commercial importance is corset manufacturing. The industrial history of this great western city that omitted to take this particular trade into account, would be verily a waist-ed effort. So flagrant a mistake should not be mine, and I determined to see for myself how these much-to-be-envied indispensables—corsets—were constructed. It is given to most men to possess a superficial acquaintance with one or more of these articles. I might unreservedly say all men: for the man who has never seen one has assuredly felt one—on occasion—more or less, according to the temperament of the wearer. To the ordinary male man a sublime ignorance as to even the rudimentary principles of the corset is generally manifested. It is my desire to acquaint my fellow-men with the true purpose of the corset, its advantages, its objects, and its objections. So one memorable day, I presented myself at the factory of Chappell, Allen, & Co., in Weare Street, Bristol, with a gentle request that the firm should enlighten my own and other people's ignorance upon so tight-fitting a subject.

Before taking the reader as far as I intend to, I may mention here that the connection between Bristol and corsets is a hereditary one. Long prior to the era of the sewing machine, the production of stays—as they were called then—held a firm footing in the city. Such a responsibility as this statement presents could not be lightly borne by any mushroom abode of man. But Bristol does not mind and does not shirk the imputation, and the cries of ages of bone-encased women of all ages only appears to increase its determination to go on corseting more than ever. There are dozens of firms all bent that way in Bristol.

The factory I visited is the largest in this industry in Bristol, and has few bigger rivals in Europe. It is comparatively a modern building, and is exceedingly well adapted to the uses it is put to. The work-rooms are large, well lighted, and clean. The work-people are superior to any I have noticed in this city of well-cared-for operatives. Such a bevy of handsome, stylish women-folk as are to be seen at work in this factory, would, were the fact better known, prompt every susceptible male journalist in this country to take ticket to Bristol, and write an article upon corset-making. I was assured that these hands had not to pass a "beauty" examination upon applying for employment. So the strange chance which fills this factory with such an undue preponderance of good-looking womankind, is very complimentary to the physical advantages of the inhabitants of the district. It is true that the corset-hand

has much in her favour. Her work is clean, healthy, and well paid. The regulations of the firm provide that all wear a neat print blouse: and combined with *retroussé* noses, sparkling eyes, red lips, and satisfactory complexions, the general effect of the work-rooms is pleasing to a degree. And it must be remembered that the writer is unmarried: a condition I never found so much against me as in the unravelling of the mysteries clustered round the corset, made or in process of making.

The origin of the corset is lost in remote antiquity. The word itself is derived from *corse*, or pair of bodies. It was the result of an undateable determination to substitute a conventional figure for a natural one. Some sort of support for the body, other than catables, has at all times been found necessary by the fairer portion of humanity. The girdle of the Grecian and Roman women was adapted to support the breasts. But the artificial shape of the waist by means of corsets is the work of more recent times. The corset was used in France as early as the twelfth century. Towards the conclusion of the fourteenth, English women appear to have been pleased with the appearance of long waists, and in order to produce that effect, constructed the strange disfigurement of that period known as the corset.

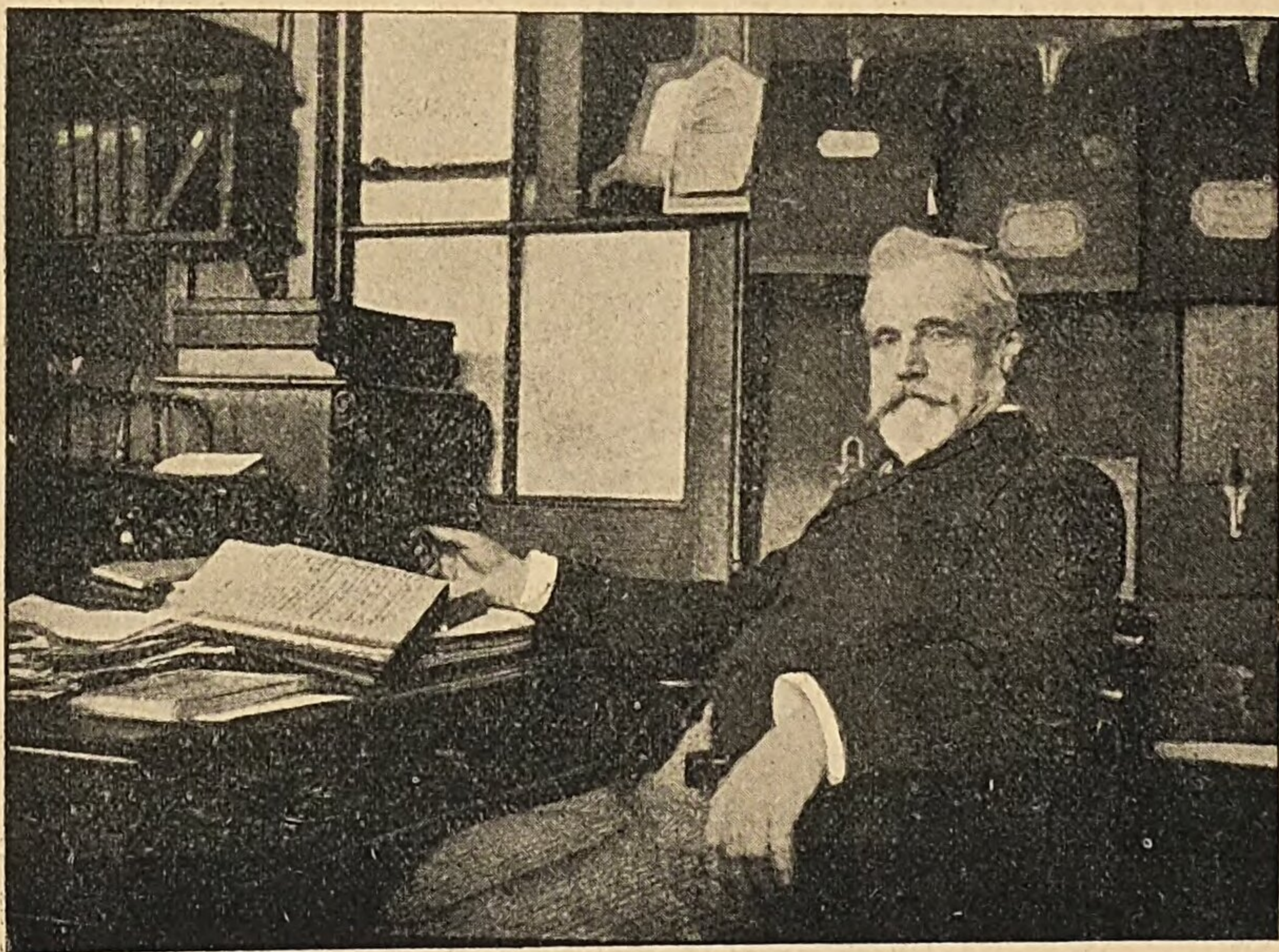
Now in dealing with the use of the corset, one must dissociate it from its abuse, under the name of tight-lacing. It is particularly reserved to our own time to demonstrate that the two things are not synonymous. Distortion is not beautiful; but the fine figured girl of the present time is. A proper proportion should exist between the size of the waist, and the breadth of the shoulders and hips. If the waist be screwed below this proportion, it falsifies its object, and disproportion and an unnatural figure is the result. In the time of Catherine de Medici of France and our own Elizabeth, the extreme narrow gauge of the corset was reached. The former sovereign initiated a fashionable standard of thirteen inch waists, and no lady considered she was cutting a proper figure unless she could span her waist with her two hands. A great difference this to the modern and more popular standard—the length of a man's arm.

It is from the time of the introduction of stays that the modern, as distinguished from the mediæval period, may be said to date. The ideal of female shape became a purely artificial one, depending upon the production of unnatural contrast in the dimensions of waist, hips, and bust. At one time the most extraordinary means were employed to get the body to fit the outrageously impossible "jewel case" of the period. One writer assures us that it was by no means an uncommon thing to see a mother lay her daughter down upon the carpet, and, placing her foot upon her back, break half-a-dozen laces in tightening her stays. After this, one is inclined to wonder at the lucky accident which still supplied the world with mothers for those of us who followed. Sober argument was no match for tight-lacing in those days. In fact, I doubt it having any effect at any time. Ridicule has been the weapon that has killed it within the recollections of some of us.

The perfect corset is a much-to-be commended thing. It supports the figure, gives it artistic curves, and keeps out the cold. The world of women wear them, and that is, after all, the principal thing, as Mr. Allen will tell you. For Mr. Allen is the "hand behind the throne" in Bristol, Mr. Chappell being located in the metropolis, looking

after the London branch of this big wholesale manufactory. Another member of the firm is Mr. Rossiter, the mechanical spirit of the company; and many of the ingenious appliances in the sole use of the firm are the results of this gentleman's inventive powers. Everything, even the obnoxious tip, comes to those who wait, and I will reward the reader who has paid me the compliment of coming as far as this, by telling him something about the subject he expected to increase his knowledge of, when he started.

I was taken first of all into the stock-room. Here I saw large stores of the different materials employed in corset-making; cloths from Manchester, canvases from Dundee, wool-Italians from Bradford: and coutills and jeans also from Cottonopolis. The range of colours these different materials disclosed was as extensive as it was pretty, for over fifty different shades were represented. The eye is not the least thing pleased in the modern



MR. C. W. ALLEN.

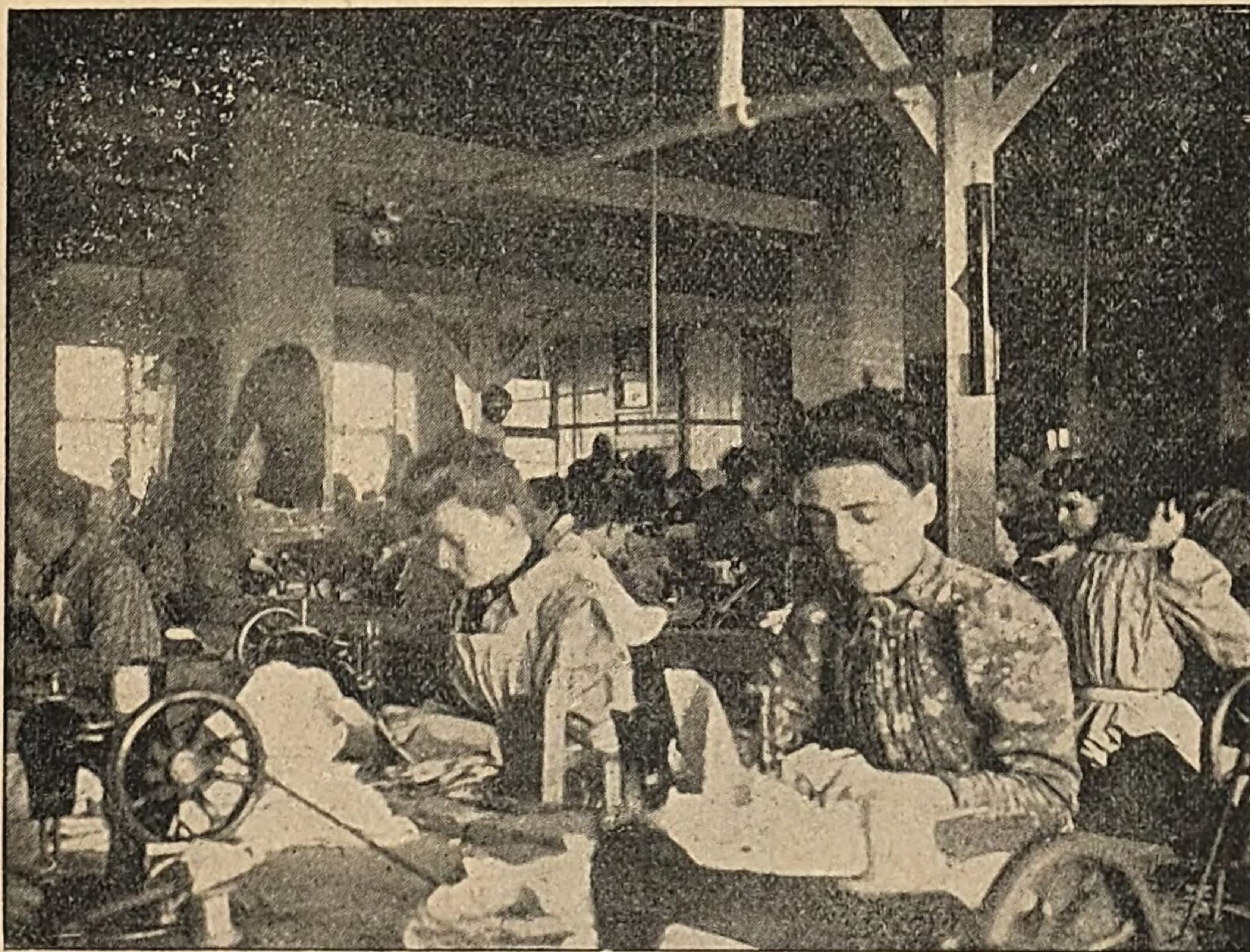
corset. To such an extent is the beauty of design, colour, and ornamentation carried, that ere I had been taken through all the stages of a corset's evolution, I was wondering what misplaced conception upon the value of appearances was responsible for their not being worn *outside* the dress. They are far too beautiful to be a sealed book of revelations to all but a few privileged men: and in the name of all the others I advance the plea for this change as being an original but important plank in the platform of dress reform.

The cloths are taken from the store-room to the cutting-room. This is a spacious department, well filled with long tables, upon which the cloths are spread and stencilled so that the marks of the pattern for the cutting knife to go over and through are discernible. There are a very large number of these knives, which, worked longitudinally and driven

by steam power, go through the thick layers of cloth with an ease and rapidity that staggers the onlooker. I never saw such cutting treatment. These neatly cut pieces are then passed over to the "parters," who sort out the different sizes and shapes, and who then put them together in bundles of a dozen, ready for the stitchers.

In this and an adjoining room great execution is done by a number of tremendously powerful guillotines, which cut the great piles of cloth strips that are put over the seams of the corsets. These are all ingeniously folded by some little machines, a process which, apart from its great neatness and accuracy of "felling," saves the sewers enormous trouble, and knocks down a lot of unnecessary labour.

The work is now sent up into two rooms. It is then given out to the workers in the factory and those outside, respectively. For as in the clothing industry, a large number



STRIPPING.

of persons do this class of work at their homes, bringing it in and taking it away at regular periods. This firm gives employment to over a thousand workers in this way, and is an important factor in the wage-earning powers of the district. As I was unable to follow the outside workers to their homes—a stern sense of duty and a desire to keep up appearances alone preventing me, for there was no lack of comeliness among the corset makers "without the gates" either—I allowed myself to be taken into what I must rather cumbrously term the machining, cording, and stripping rooms.

Cane is as extensively employed in making corsets as in teaching the young idea how to shoot. It is used in many different widths, comes from the Continent, and is ordered by the tens of tons. There is hardly need to mention that this cane is used to strengthen and

stiffen the cloth divisions of the corset, and to this end also is utilised large quantities of twine. This is obtained locally, and is bought by the ton. Another substance used for cording stays is called quillbone. It is the invention of the customary American, and Messrs. Chappell, Allen, & Co. have the sole right of utilising it for the purpose of manufacture in this country. This gives them an immense advantage in the struggle for supremacy in corset production, as this quillbone, like kings, has many latent virtues. It is made from the quills of feathers, split up, and then bound together with silk. It is perfectly unbreakable, and is fondly believed to wear for ever. It has taken the place of the prohibitively expensive whalebone, and is in many ways actually its superior. Its



FANNING.

extreme pliability allows the corset to yield to every movement of the figure; in fact, it possesses, like the writer, all the virtues, with the additional advantage of not becoming limp and soft with old age. One need not wear corsets to grasp the significance of including this pliable, amenable stiffening in their manufacture. The perfect corset should bend with the body. This makes the perfect corset.

The joining of the different parts of the stays together is now proceeded with. An automatic machine here plays an active part, on the "penny in the slot" system, but with more reliable results. The separate portions of the corset are firmly bound together on both sides simultaneously by means of strips, which are sewn top and bottom at one stitching. This is done by a two-needled machine, the invention of Mr. Rossiter, and patented by the firm. Another use this machine

is capable of being put to is that of affixing a strip containing three different widths of cane at one time. This is effected by a special attachment, which, as would be expected, is joined to the machine by the closest of ties. Having been well caned and strung up, the corset at this stage is amenable to any other treatment in store for it, and is ready for busking.

Besides cane and cork, a material called French horn—whose merits were much trumpeted by my guide—is incorporated extensively into the manufacture of corsets. It also has superseded the old-fashioned whalebone. It is stronger than cane and wears

better, and is rather cheaper than whalebone, which is now worth over £3,000 a ton. In this department scores of girls were busily at work deftly forcing the horn into the pockets for the purpose, sewn in the corset. In this department also, the steel backs that support the back of the corset are put in. There is much of the ironclad about the modern corset. But then, consider what precious merchandise it encases! There is an apartment adjoining, which, in whatever order it is taken, is well shaken, for several double rows of fiercely clattering machines are at work. In no other part of the factory is such a ceaseless clatter kept up, and I interrupted the strict order of my inspectorial course to see what the noise was all about. I ascertained that I was in the gang room, and that these many instruments of ear torture were cording belts. The belts form the bottom part of the corset—what is called the abdominal portion, and their cording, which is the sewing into

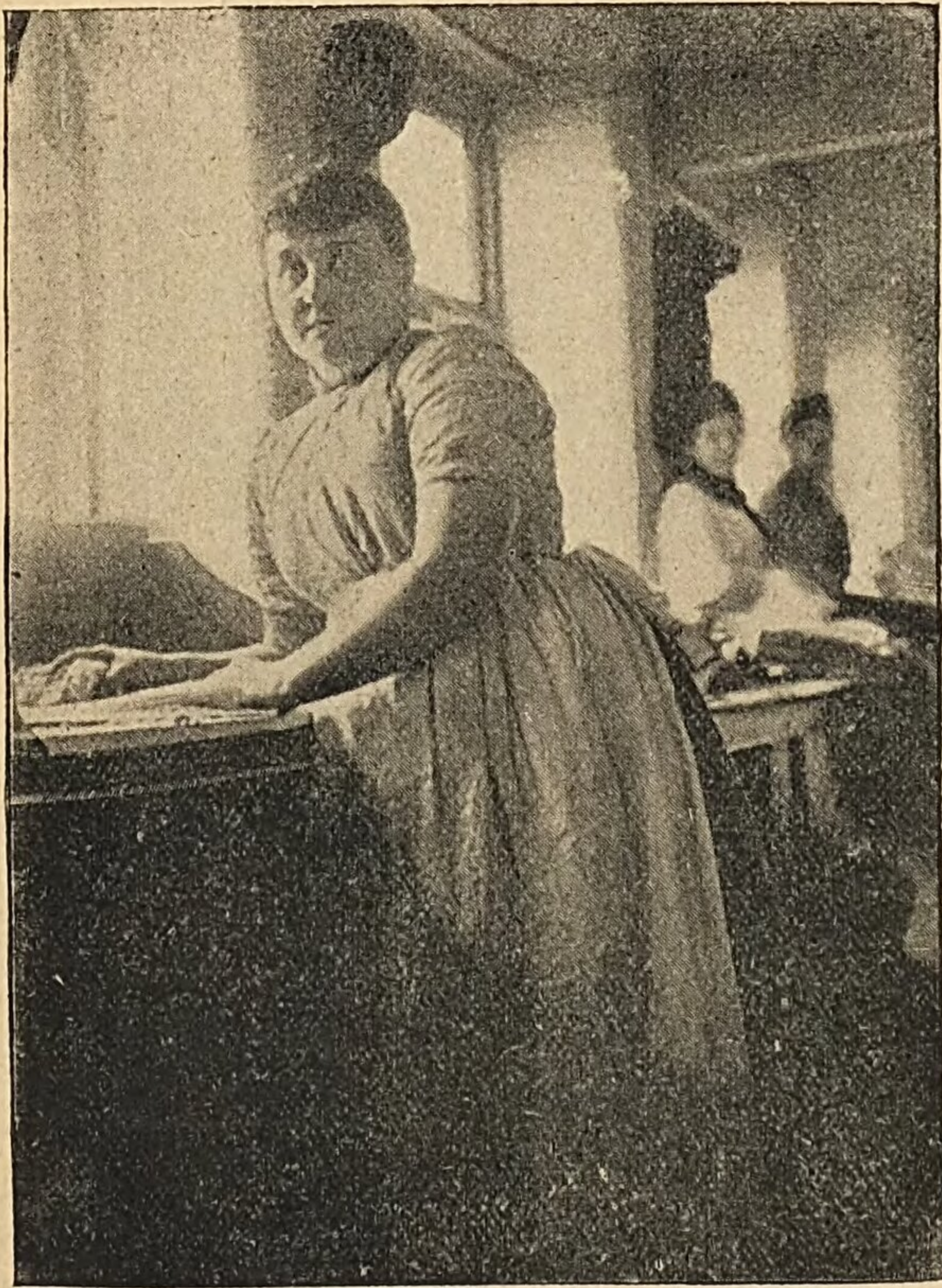


STITCHING.

the cloth of many rows of cord, renders this part of the stay both pliable and firm. When the body of the wearer is bent, the corset moves with it, and the acme of comfort is obtained. I should have liked to have tested this practically; my sense of realism would have been more satisfied had I done so. Unfortunately, the firm had no corset in stock over 48 inches. So I must endeavour to stay the course uncorseted a little while longer. This binding of belts is done on a large scale, the pieces of cloth being bounded by the height of the room in one sense, and the machine in another. They are afterwards taken downstairs, where they are cut into the necessary shapes and sizes.

As I said, the corset, which is beginning to show signs after all this caning of being licked into shape, has the busk put in. This is an important feature of the making, for

no corset would be complete without a busk. The busk is made from the best Sheffield steel, with brass fittings. Its use is not merely that of ornament, for it fastens both sides of the corset together. A "stay with me" refrain. And at this stage I am reminded of a youthful visit to the theatre, and seeing a play in which a decidedly original reference to the subject of this chapter was made. The villain was going off on the O.P. side, when he was stopped by a man with a pistol, who exclaimed, "*Stay!*" So the villain bolted to the other side, only to find his way barred by another be-pistolled individual, who also ejaculated, "*Stay!*" "What, a pair of *stays*," gasped the villain, "what a *coarse set!*" But I must return to my busk. The corset has now back, front, sides, has



BREAD-CRUMBING.

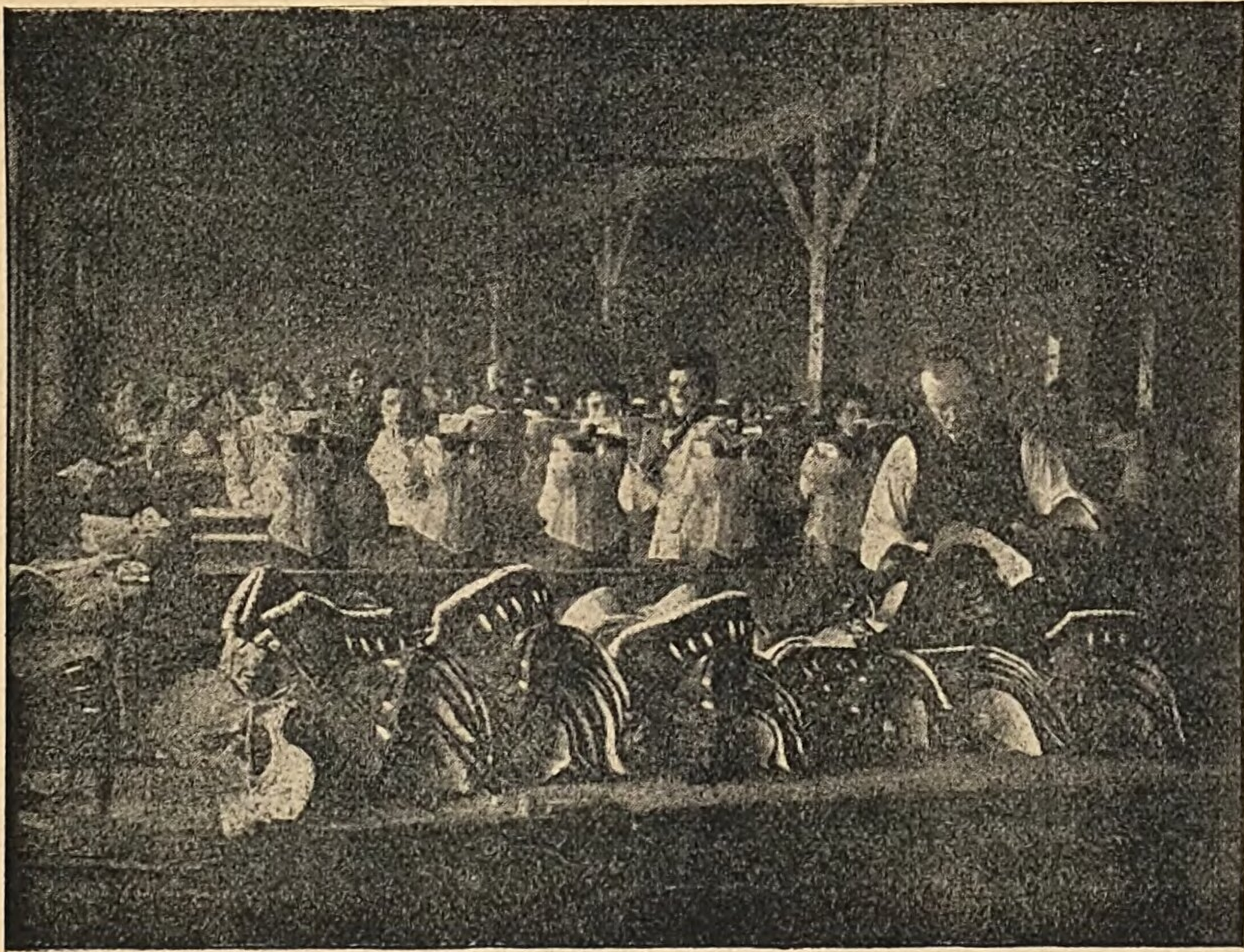
got well filled with cane, string, and bone, and is beginning to have more of the appearance of the unfamiliar things the advertisement columns of fashionable newspapers have acquainted us with. It is now sent up to the fitting-room to be trimmed and have the rough edges removed. The latter operation is done by men, assisted by powerful shears. But the trimming is too interesting a performance to be treated in any manner but alone. It deserves a separate paragraph.

I visited the largest rooms in this big factory to witness the *modus operandi* of this portion of the manufacturing. Many hundreds of machines were at work here, and what is technically termed the binding, is the portion of most of them. The stay is bound all over with either the same material as it is made from, or with another cloth of

another colour. The most pretty effect is got from these juxtaposition of tints. The powerful machines drive the needle through the edges of the corset with great rapidity, piercing cloth, cane, bone, and cords, and fixing the binding firmly to the main body. Then the corset has eyelets put in, which is done at separate tables, and are affixed by means of powerful machines. These pierce the holes, with which the neat brass eyelets are riveted, and through which the stay laces are passed, later on. The corset now wants only its finishing touches ere it is ready for active service. These comprise the pretty lace edgings and fancy embroiderings that add so much to the attractiveness of the corsets' appearance,

INDUSTRIES.

if they benefit its use as a restraining influence but little. The designing of the different patterns of trimming and embroidering is onerous work. The firm employ skilled artists for this department, and their versatility is remarkable. With them there is no new pattern under the sun, so rapidly do they evolve some fresh design to replace that of the day before. The embroidering is mostly done by machinery, only the most expensive class of goods being brought up by hand in this respect. This is the very refinement of skilled sewing, which, I trust, reaps good financial seed to the clever machinists. It is quite an education to witness one of these hands at this work. And, strange to say, if the answers I received to my queries are to be relied upon, the work is exceedingly simple and easy to acquire. Which goes to substantiate the adage about forming impressions from appearances.



BLOCKING.

The corset is now ready for examination. To pass this it must not have been scamped in anything. Every individual portion of the workmanship in the corset is put to the test, and if found wanting, is returned to the department responsible for the deficiency. By this means, the creditable condition of every corset made by the firm is guaranteed ere it passes into the warehouse. But our corset has not quite reached the "boxing-up" process yet. It has to be starched and blocked.

The first process takes place in what I shall dub the firm's laundry. Here every corset is well starched on the inside with very thick starch, so that it does not penetrate through the cloth. They are then ironed. White corsets are subjected to a liberal scrubbing with bread crumbs before the ironing takes place. The effect of this ought to

be obvious to everyone. I am not certain enough about this point myself to hazard a less general explanation: though there is something novel about this ironing, for these irons are heated with gas, air being pumped into them to keep the gas alight. And then, last scene of all, every corset is led to the block.

The scope of execution here is extensive; of that there is not the least shadow of a doubt. An almost endless room is here, with interminable rows of narrow scaffolding, on which at equal distances are headless mummies, or things of that appearance. These are really hollow iron moulds, into which steam is forced: with the result that quite a lively heat is engendered, and easily perceptible to the naked touch, as I inadvertently demonstrated. These "blocks" are of different shapes and sizes, so that any kind of corset can be accommodated with a model. Scarcely any of the many opposing theories



HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

as to the perfect form of female shape could be unsatisfied in this model room. The general appearance of these hundreds of steaming, beheaded, half-naked bodies was an uncanny one, especially as the realistic effect was heightened considerably by the semi-dressed condition these figures presented, clothed only in a pair of stays. As a modest man I might have found much food for objection in all this; but the true historian must hide his emotions and stick to his last vivid conception of what he has to describe. These moulds fix the corsets into shape in about five minutes, the heat drawing the damp starched material close round the iron stand and forming it as shaped: the while it is allowed to dry.

When dried, fresh laces are fixed into the corsets, silk cord being used in the best goods, and they are then sent down to the different departments to be boxed. Over

a million pairs of corsets were made and sold by the firm last year, the orders received being drawn up on mammoth lines, for only the wholesale trade is supplied. Mr. Aller's remarks upon the change of fashion in these things are worth reproduction. Three or four years ago the shape most worn was a short one with a corded belt. Now there is a run upon a pattern the firm calls the "Longchamps," which is very deep, very long waisted, and high bosomed, with straps across the shoulders. As an outsider, I consider this form of corset the most symmetrical thing imaginable, and certainly hope that the fortunate lady who may become Mrs. Lesser Columbus will affect this style. If not, I must stipulate for either the "Crossine" or "La Figurine," also specialities of the firm. I took a big bundle of these up for examination, and I can assure the sceptical reader that I never had my arms round so many corsets, at one time, in my life. This is a fact.



GROUP OF WORKPEOPLE.

Variety is charming—in corsets—as in other things. So over 500 new patterns are turned out every year. It is marvellous: at least to the untutored or unmarried mind. I left my novel field of inquiry a sadder if a wiser man. For I could not help ruminating upon the vivid spectacle of the rule of the corset all I had seen, afforded. Of a surety, the corset is mightier than the sword, for more than half—and it the better half—of the human race, is held in the tight-laced thralldom of the corset autocrat. Fashions may come and fashions may go, but the wearing of corsets goes on for ever. If ever the North Pole is discovered—and I have been as near reaching it as most people—I prophesy that there will be found perched on the summit, not the problematic Scotchman, but a lady wearing a "Longchamps" corset. It is dreadful to contemplate, but I fear

me, it is too true. All the wide world over everything is making way before its eagerly-waited-for advance. In far Japan, the pretty ladies of that sunny land are doffing the delightfully-interminable and strangely-adjusted sashes of their youth and past ages, and using in their place the body-cases of the West. And I have been assured on the best unreliable authority, that it is the favourite, in fact the only article of costume the dusky lady millions of unexplored Africa sport. With such a *clientèle* corset manufacturers need not despair of finding markets for their wares: and, as I said, the corset in use is a commendable article, whatever can be justly thought of its abuse. I will add that the process of their manufacture is the most interesting of studies, and in the case of this particular firm, a study under the pleasantest conditions and with singularly good-looking surroundings. As in the case of the Yankee *entrepreneur* who appeared before the curtain with a request to the audience that they should not shoot the pianist, "*he was doing his best,*" so in extenuation of any imperfections contained in my description, I plead for the same indulgence for the same reasons.

ON SOAP.

BRISTOL may have little to do with soap. Its streets justify this doubt. But soap, or its manufacture, has a lot to do with Bristol. Another great mind forestalled me in that particular immortal saying anent the association of cleanliness and godliness. And in spite of its myriad churches and its half share in a whole bishop, if Bristol is not the godliest of all cities, it is not the fault of Messrs. Christr. Thomas & Bros., Limited.

Both on entering and departing from Bristol by train, the first and most striking edifice noticeable from your carriage window is the soap and candle works of this firm. No other factory in England has such a peculiar appearance. If it were not for the big-lettered announcement to the contrary, these soap-works might be a modern workhouse, an ancient castle, or a Florentine monastery. In due course I paid Messrs. Thomas a visit, and was shown all over their magnificent works. As a result, I shall be able to embody in the following a description of what I saw in them. But first of all, no one would be a whit the worse if I explained in the first case what soap is. In an age like the present, when wares rely almost solely upon advertisement for their proper comprehension by the public, such a comparatively unknown thing as soap requires an introduction.

Right back through the ages, much further into the regions of the remote past than even I am able to remember, the art of softening water and of taking something with it (not necessarily alcohol) for the purpose of washing and cleansing, has been known and adopted. Pliny senior, who died A.D. 79, was responsible for the first authentic advertisement of soap. He speaks of it as having been first manufactured by the Gauls, who, as was natural, produced the caustic-alkali from wormwood and natural earth. The remains of a Pompeian soap-factory, in a perfect state of preservation—due no doubt to the oil used in the manufacture of the material—are to be seen for the visiting and the small sum of two francs, at that resurrected city. To those of my readers who have suffered sufficiently from my writings to seek solace in the Scriptures, I may mention that in Jeremiah ii. 22, they may read, "*For though thou wash thee with nitre and take thee much sope.*" This is not a sentence in a thousand for either beauty of grammar or symmetry of diction—and a fault could be found here and there with the spelling. But as casting light upon the patriarchal age of soap, it is worth all the looking up I have given to its unearthing.

It was not until the early part of the present century that soap as a manufactured article made much progress. The researches of Chevreul into the constitution of fatty bodies—a subject he had a great leaning for—and the manufacture of soda from the

common or garden order of salt, established on a scientific basis the practical methods now employed in the making of an article that is more responsible for the life of the average newspaper than most people are aware of.

Soap-making is essentially a chemical operation. It appeals, as it were, to all senses at once, but to one in particular. A man who has too keen a scent for smells above the ordinary, ought never to visit a soap works.—But this is digressing. Soap is a combination of fatty matter and alkali, and not as people think—a thing for advertising.

There are quite a number of ingredients which go to form the fatty matter indispensable to soap production. There is tallow, palm-oil, cocoanut-oil, cottonseed-oil, and “grease” assorted. These are the practical elements with which a soap manufacturer has to deal.

MR. J. K. CHAMPION.

MR. RUSSELL THOMAS.



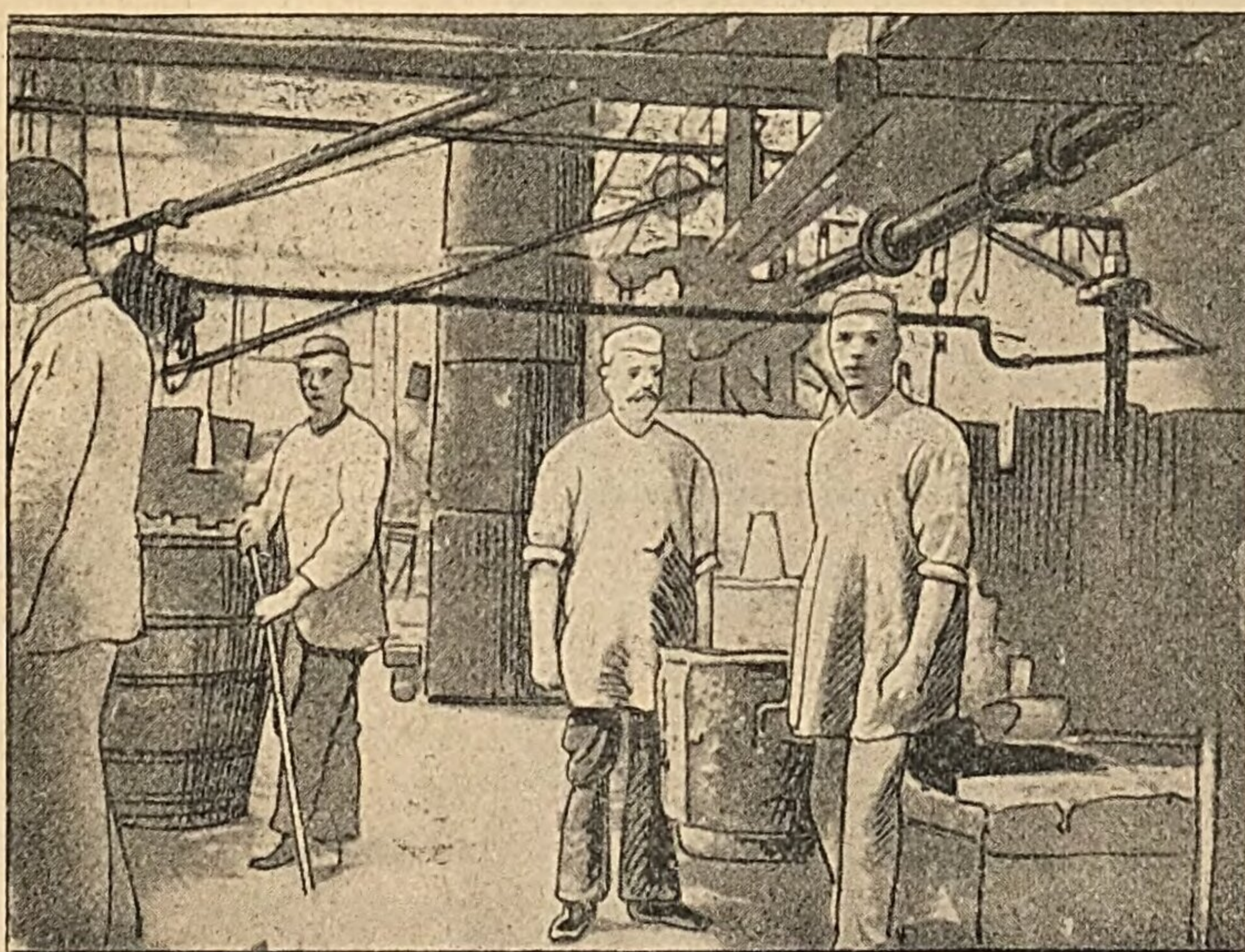
MR. WILLIAM EDWARDS.

MR. WILLIAM ROSCOE.

Theoretically, soap-making is nothing more than turning out the base-born glycerine from the neutral fats, by alkali (such as potash or soda) with water. While, therefore, any combinations of fatty acids with a mineral base may be regarded as a “soap,” no commercial, as opposed to theoretical soaps, are made except with potash or soda, as only these soaps are soluble in water: which goes to show that an ounce of practical soap is easier to wash with than a cwt. of theoretical example. And now, presuming that the intelligent reader knows all about it—and I have always been remarkable for my presumption—I will proceed to show what all this has got to do with Messrs. Christr. Thomas & Bros., Limited.

The original founder of this firm was Mr. Thomas Thomas, of Llangadock, Carmarthen-shire. In the year 1825, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Mr. Jones (of Wales),

Mr. Thomas Thomas opened a manufactory in Old Red Lion Yard, which was situated in Thomas Lane, Thomas Street, in St. Thomas's, Bristol. The start was not much to speak of then, but something to be proud of now. There was no steam-engine in those works. There were many reasons for this, one being the non-existence of steam-engines. But the founders got over this trifling difficulty. They brought up their soap by hand. Hand over hand as it were. For from that day the firm never looked back. They had no need of pillars of salt, it seems. They made their own. Lots of it. When he was twenty-two years young, Mr. Christopher James Thomas, the eldest son of the founder of the firm, was introduced to and into the business, which traded as Jones & Thomas. He was a hard-worker, was Christopher Thomas, and the progress of the firm was rapid. In 1833 new premises were taken, and Mr. Jones retired. In 1841 an even older firm amalgamated



SOAP BOILING.

with what was now Thomas, Thomas, & Sons, by name—Fripp & Co. Although not competitors of Pliny senior, there is a die in use at present at the Broad Plain Soap Works which bears the date of 1745 and the name of Fripp & Co.

The new firm settled down on the site they are at present to be seen upon, and traded under the name of Messrs. Thomas, Fripp, & Thomas. In the same year the founder of the firm retired. In 1856 Mr. Edward Fripp followed his example, leaving as partners the four brothers, Christopher James Thomas, Thomas Thomas, junior, Herbert Thomas, and Charles Thomas. The last two are now chairman and vice-chairman of the company's board. Ever since, the firm has been known in every part of the washing world as Christ. Thomas & Bros. The title has since received an addition by becoming "limited." And at the time of going to press, the firm is of immense magnitude, with "Excelsior" as its motto, and an Assyrian winged bull as its trade mark.

I was taken in charge—not that I had been doing anything more than usually reprehensible—by Mr. William Roscoe, Mr. Russell Thomas, Mr. J. K. Champion, and Mr. William Edwards, who between them explained to me the *modus operandi*, and fulfilled the duties of executors *in futuro* had the smells of certain of the preliminary soap-making operations proved too much for me. From the offices, I was taken into one of the buildings, and thence my gently sliding progress was eased by the slippery state of my surroundings.

The first room was a revelation. It is called the tallow steaming house. The tallow is rolled into this place in casks and put over steam jets, which melt it and cause it to run down through the bung-hole into a pit. From there it is pumped into tanks overhead, where it is refined and bleached. From there it is run into the soap coppers, along troughs.

Tallow is by far the most important of all the fatty matters used in the production of what is termed household soaps. Tallow is got from everything, and from everywhere. You or I could be turned into something useful like tallow on an emergency. In Australia, sheep were bred purely on account of their value as tallow-producing subjects, and millions of them have been boiled down solely for that purpose. The meat was thrown away. Since that time Australian frozen mutton has been invented, and we all know what becomes of that meat now.

Besides the fatty matters I have enumerated as ingredients for soap-making, rosin plays an important part. There are two kinds of rosin, French and American. The latter has the pull in fragrant smells. It has a big range of tints, has rosin. The finest grades would form good substitutes for window glass, and they vary from this down to a black opaqueness. The lighter shades are used in the manufacture of the best soaps. Rosin as an adjunct in soap-making may be described as an ameliorate, and it makes soap popular, for it renders it soluble and produces a copious lather. So it justifies the rosin *d'être* of its incorporation. In the yards and storehouses of Messrs. Thomas, I saw thousands of casks of rosin. There cannot surely be any more rosin left for any of the other makers!

There is still one other thing necessary to complete our list of soap ingredients, and this is—caustic-alkali. This is a wonderful production, and its manufacture is mightily entertaining. The materials necessary for the black-ash process are salt-cake, limestone or chalk, and coal, and the plant required is a reverberatory furnace. There are quite a number of these furnaces at work in the firm's black-ash department. The climatic conditions round about these parts make one wish for winter.

These materials, *i.e.*, the tallow, etc., and caustic-soda—or goods, as they were called by my instructors—are run into the “coppers” in a liquid form, and these are all boiled together. The “copper” room is an “awesome sight,” as they say in the North. There never were such “coppers.” Even the Dublin Metropolitan Police would dwarf into impotence alongside these mighty pans. Any one of these “coppers” would make a fairly commodious swimming bath—under improper conditions. There was nothing cool and refreshing about them on the day of my visit. Everything was in a boiling rage in these coppers, and blustered and bubbled as if they knew it. The heat is engendered by steam. Great pipes circle round the interior of these mammoth pans, through which steam is

perpetually passing. An ingenious contrivance—a sort of miniature ship-paddle—is at work over each copper, which prevents the boiling mass boiling over. These perform the laws of perpetual revolution, the leaves of the paddle just stirring the top of the yellow semi-liquid. I now know what sort of constituent I have long gazed on but never been able to see through, from the unpleasant-smelling proximity of Bristol Bridge.

When the operation of soap making is finished, the soap is allowed to stand for from three to six days in the copper, when it “settles a nigre”—a different thing from killing an Ethiopian. This means that the darker and less pure portions of the mixed mass settles down, and falls to the bottom, and is used in the manufacture of inferior sorts of soaps.

The top portion, being the finished soap, is then pumped into large iron frames, in which it cools. These frames take to pieces, and leave the soap exposed in huge, firm blocks of 12 cwt. each. It is then ready for cutting. This would appear to be a formidable operation, and one would expect some powerful machine to enter upon such a difficult-looking job. But a thin piece of ordinary piano-wire in the hands of two men, one at each end of it, is the only cutting instrument employed in the process. The block of soap is marked by a gauge into equal portions, and through these lines the wire is drawn by the two men, with an ease that staggers the onlooker. This is for the cutting on a large scale, for each of these slabs measures about 4 feet long by 15 inches across, and is about 3 inches deep. These are put into trucks, and taken to the cutting machines, which are lever-frames, containing wires which are drawn through the soap slabs, cutting them in large numbers into the required sizes.



SOAP CUTTING.

Bar soap—which is not necessarily the kind used in washing the counters in public-houses—when freshly cut, is impressed with the name of the firm. This is done by a hand stamp, and is comparatively easy work. There is the soap, there the boy—down comes the stamp, thump—and the thing is done. I believe that there is no process connected with soap-making in which I could show such proficiency on an emergency as this last one.

Other shapes of soap are stamped by presses worked by hand and steam-power,

which really shape as well as name the soap. The only material point in which the numerous stamping machines I saw in active work differed, was in the shape. And that accounts for our being able to get soap in round balls, soap in square blocks, and soap in oval cakes. No matter how fastidious the buyer, he can be suited as regards shape, colour, size, and quality. It is very evident by all this, that while there is life—there is soap.

It is not as well known as it ought to be that the firm whose premises I am going over a second time and in another way, are the originators of what is called “cold water soap.” It is a principal item of Messrs. Thomas’s export trade. I will explain why. All soaps contain a large percentage of water, some as much as 50 per cent. Now, a soap of this kind will shrink when kept even for a short length of time—especially in hot



STAMPING.

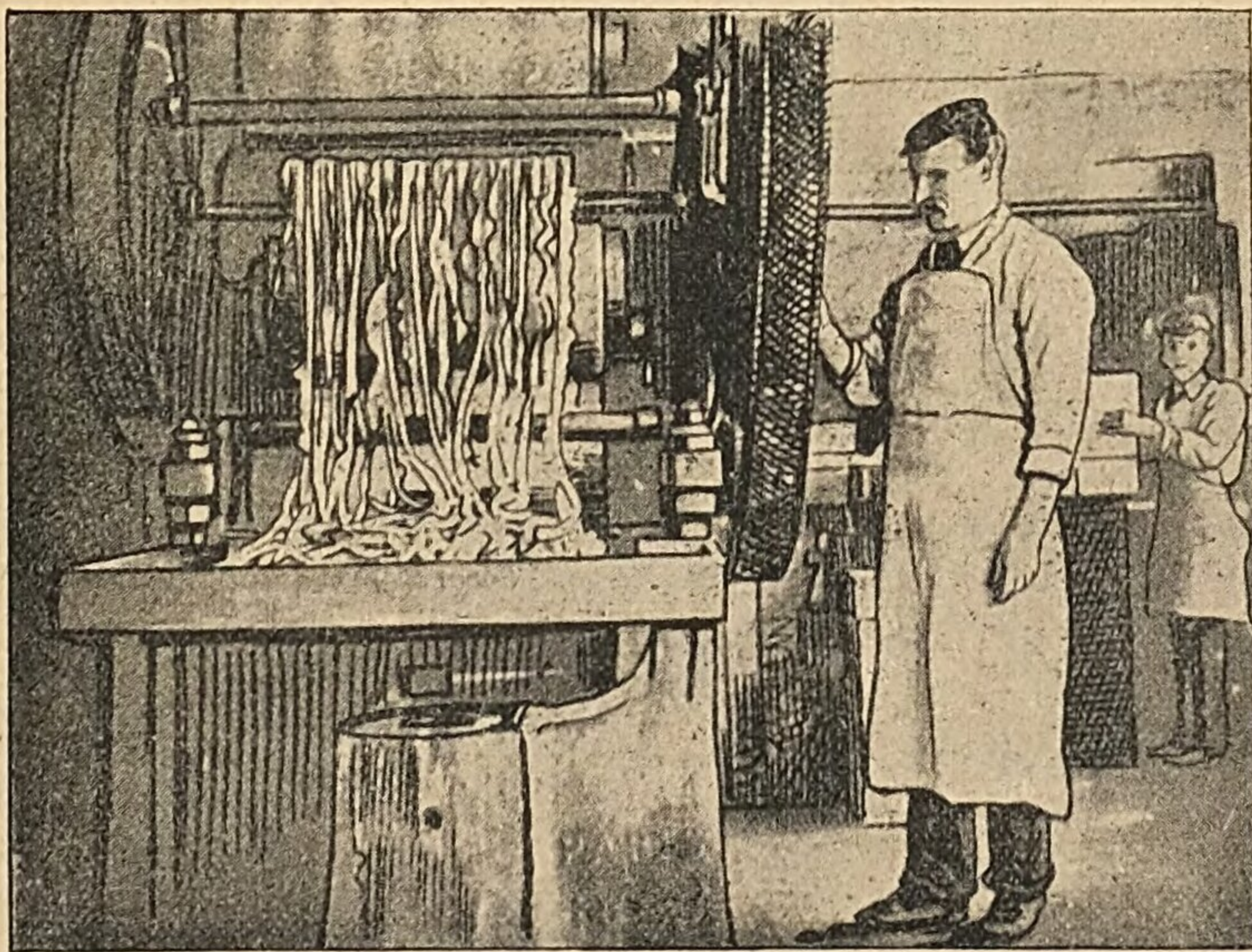
countries. As Thomas’s cold water soap contains only about 20 per cent. of water, and has, I am told, a larger percentage of fatty matter than any other soap in the market, it never shrinks, and will always be found full weight, even after being kept for months in a hot climate. I was shown a one pound tablet made in the beginning of 1877, which even now has not lost one ounce in weight.

But every kind of soap is made here. I saw soap in its mottled form, in its cold-water cured form, in its finest yellow household aspect, in its curd or of the finest-white-as-snow aspect, in its olive-oil or finest-toilet-soap-in-the-world form, in the strange shape familiar to the manufacturers’ uses; soap for wool scouring, soap for silk throwsters, and soap for toilet purposes. This latter kind has a variety whose name is legion, and whose purposes are legendary. A soap intended for toilet purposes undergoes a careful preparation over

INDUSTRIES.

and above that already described in its manufacture. In the room set apart for the purpose, redolent of perfumes, there is a milling plant, which consists of a series of granite rollers moving in opposite directions. Through these, after it has received its admixture of colouring and scenting materials, the "dough" is rolled and ground into a flat pancaky form over and over again. An ingenious knife arrangement then cuts it into long thin strips, and as it falls over and from the granite rollers, it savours in appearance of the waterfall of our boyhood's pantomime days. This is then forced through a screw, and comes out in a firm bar form, when it is cut up into pieces, and undergoes shaping and stamping ere it is the finished scented tablet of commerce.

Disinfectant soaps are largely made by the firm. In no way can disinfectants be so agreeably applied to the skin as when incorporated with soap. Having once used



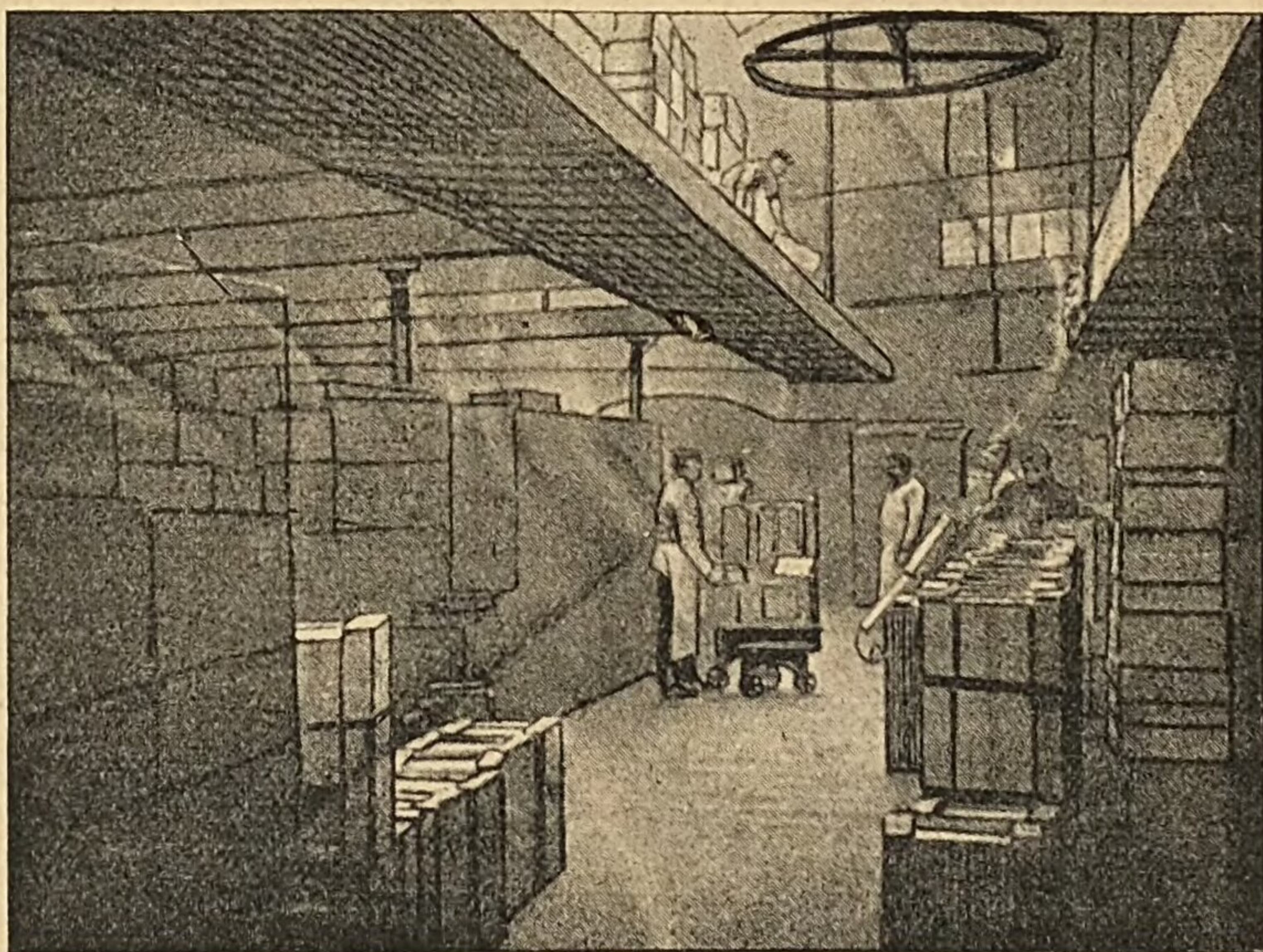
MILLING.

this soap it is my intention never to use any other. N.B.—This last sentence is copyrighted.

Now the transparent soaps shown me on my visit gave me much food for reflection. It will scarcely be believed that the peculiar appearance of these soaps is due to the use of alcohol in their fabrication. That one is enabled to see double through an alcoholic medium has long been an established theory, frequently put into practice—not, I hasten to add, by myself. But that, as in the case of these soaps, alcohol is responsible for the ability to see through them, is a scientific fact calculated to knock a good many popular fallacies on the head. The preparation is an interesting one, and, strange to say, of a perfectly steady character. The soaps are well dried, and then dissolved in strong alcohol, which causes the insoluble properties to fall to the bottom. The latter is then distilled off, condensed and recovered, or is sobered down for use in the next operation. The soap now

presents a treacly mass, which cools to a semi-transparent solid. The hot soap is poured into moulds and allowed to cool; it is then set aside for some months—in disgrace as it were—and is exposed to a temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit. This passes it from the muddy, semi-opaque condition to one of perfect transparency, and it is then stamped, polished, and sent into the market as an excellent thing for the complexion, a suitable material for bubble-blowing, a prevention of all the ills that either flesh or skin is heir to, and, on an emergency, a good thing to eat. In fact there is no limit to the possibilities of this soap's mission on earth. It is simply bounded on the one side by the daringness of the inventive powers of the advertiser, and on the other, by the believing and buying powers of the public; so my "no limit" theory is established.

When the soap in mass has been cut up into the regulation pieces, it is transported into



PACKING SOAPS.

one of the many packing-rooms of the firm. Now as soap is a thing that, without exception, has to be boxed wherever it goes, the firm have practically another immense industry hidden within the midst of their enormous staple trade. The box-making shop is one of the most interesting parts of the many buildings which together form the soap-works whole. Here a number of box-making machines of the most approved and labour-saving type, career their noisy clattering way along. The wood, which comes from Norway, cut into the necessary straight boards, is fitted up and nailed together with an indescribable swiftness by these mechanical box makers. Enormous stocks of wood are used up. I saw myself acres upon acres of boards: and the power of association was so strong, that it was only by dint of strenuous mental effort that I was able to realise that I was in a soap factory, and not in a huge carpenters' shop. In this same room a printing press stamps the top boards with the name and trade mark of the house in blood-

red letters. My friend the Assyrian bull had from the beginning a strange fascination for me. In his larger and redder form on the box top, I could scarcely leave him.

One of the packing rooms which I visited presented a lively picture. Here were weighing machines, upon which the soap was measured out from great walls of it that are built up all over the place. Into the boxes it goes, and in a short time another soap wall has to be built to keep the voracious packers in countenance. These boxes are taken down into what are known as the shipping offices, where they are checked and sent out on their healthy and cleansing mission.

It was now time that I should see something of candle-making, an industry in which this house shines with a many candle power. To get to this part of the works, I had to pass through what is called, with an unwonted sense of the fitness of things, Rotten Row. There isn't much in a name as a rule. Nothing demonstrates that better than our famous Hyde Park drive in season. But I will give Messrs. Thomas credit for their undoubted candour in calling a spade a spade. The smell, or rather the multitude of opposing scents that are indigenous to the surroundings of Rotten Row in Bristol, are a never-to-be-forgotten or recovered-from memory. But I must pass on—to linger here even metaphorically is unpleasant—and hasten to the comparatively heaven-like atmospheric associations of the candle-making rooms.

These rooms are large, and filled with strange-looking furniture. These are really candle-moulds. Each mould is capable of turning out some hundreds of candles at one operation. I have always had a sneaking fondness for candles. The legends of my boyhood included their discovery by that wonderful Alfred the Great of ours, and their employment as the chronometer of that not-too-particular-to-a-minute time and period. The candle, like most things, has had an extensive evolutionary experience. It is really a lineal descendant from the torch of the pre-historic era. Next came the link, which was cordage saturated with rosin and pitch. After that, the *flambeau*, which was a superior sort of link, and had a use in pre-golfian days.

The candle of commerce is no longer the halfpenny dip of our grandfathers. Wax, and later still, paraffin, are responsible for the materials of their light and leading causes



CANDLE MOULDS.

of existence. The candle has no fixed price. Its value—as determined at so much a pound in a grocer's shop, has about as much to do with the price you would be asked to pay for “candles and lights” at a seaside hotel, as this digression has with my subject. But I am always waxing enthusiastic about some side issue or other, and this time it is candles—in a tallow or a wax or a paraffin form.

The wick has a lot to do with a candle. It is as indispensable to the rest of the article as the tail is to the dog when he requires to wag it. The great trouble with wicks was that they didn't burn away fast enough, and snuffing them meant getting out of bed even on a winter's night. Luckily for our peace of mind as a nation, the wick is now saturated in a chemical preparation ere it is incorporated into the candle, and dissolves into thin air as the flame leaves it. It is an age of great discoveries.



GROUP OF FOREMEN.

These wicks are on bobbins at the bottom part of the candle-moulds, and are drawn up the middle of tubes, where they are held firmly at the top. The liquid wax is poured into the top of these moulds, and is left to cool, a proceeding assisted by the cold water troughs surrounding the moulds. Then the use of a screw lever forces up the candle, a finished polished whole, a thing of beauty and a joy for ever—till burnt!

Quite a number of subsidiary businesses are carried on in these buildings. From so much raw material, a large percentage of waste is obtained, and from which “cotton” oils are refined. In the basement of the building are a multitude of tanks which contain the crude oil as it comes from the crushing-house. It is pumped up into huge refinery tanks, each yielding, after the refinery process is completed, about twenty-five tons of oil. Most of this is exported: to be imported, no doubt, in the close confinement of sardine-tins, as the “finest olive oil.”

Then there is the article technically known as "glycerine leys." This, after having been used in converting materials into soap, was formerly run away as a waste substance. It was understood that it contained a considerable proportion of that chap-dispelling liquid called "glycerine"—but how to get at it was a mystery not then solved. The credit of settling that knotty point rests entirely with a member of this firm, Mr. Charles Thomas. An invention was discovered which enabled them to extract a large proportion of the glycerine from the chemical elements of the "leys." The firm at the Broad Plain Works dispose of very large quantities which go to form that earthquake-provoking and revolution-accomplishing material, known to the world as dynamite.

I do not wish it to be supposed that the discovery of the connection between soap and Bristol is mine. The following quotation shows how late I was:—

"BRISTOL. (Fuller's Worthies of England.) 1662.

"Manufactures.—*Gray-Sope*.

"I behold *Bristol* as the staple place thereof, where alone it was anciently made. For though there be a place in *London* nigh *Cheapside* called *Soper-lane*, it was never so named from that commodity made therein (as some have supposed) but from *Alen le Soper*, the long since owner thereof. Yea, it is not above an hundred and fifty years, by the confession of the chronicler of that city, since the first sope was boyled in *London*. Before which time the land was generally supplied with *castile* from *Spain* and *Gray-sope* from *Bristol*. Yea, after that *London* meddled with the making thereof, *Bristol-sope* notwithstanding the portage was found much the cheaper."

ON FLOOR-CLOTHS.

NOW on this particular morning Bristol and its environs were enveloped in a mist approximating in denseness to a genuine London fog and water. As what I am going to write will show, Bristol is well oiled, so to speak. But this circumstance did not make my endeavours to keep an appointment for the purpose of seeing how oil and floor-cloths were made any easier. Luckily, the fog considerably betook itself to some other city, where its presence would not savour so much of the ordinary night as in Bristol, and I found I had not gone many miles out of my way. My strong sense of smell had served me in good stead, Bristol Bridge was near at hand, and five minutes' walking brought me to the gated entrance of the Bath-road Works of J. Hare & Co., makers of paints and oilcloths. I entered a gateway, as did several large drays loaded with mysterious and ominously greasy-smelling barrels. Unlike these, I made my way to the building marked "offices," and was soon shown into the *sanctum sanctorum* of the manager, Mr. C. H. Tuckett. Surrounded by myriads of differently sized bottles with varied coloured contents, and a telephone, was he whom I wanted. Mr. Tuckett is the sort of man one cannot help looking up to, even though you be possessed of more than the ample stock of inches longitudinal allotted to myself. And it is casting no reflection upon Mr. Tuckett's courtliness of disposition to assert that, more by design than accident, he is compelled to look down upon his less expanded fellow-creatures. Timorously—for I was able to see at a glance that I was in the presence of one of nature's great men—I introduced the object of my visit. It received hearty encouragement. And with light heart and tread I set about an inspection of the works, which cover some seventeen acres of ground. But I little knew what manner of task I had undertaken.

It transpired that among the many things Messrs. Hare were, being makers of white-lead was one. In fact, they are the only makers of this indispensable commercial product in these parts. This as a piece of information is interesting, I grant. It is even, no doubt, a source of profit to the firm, and of good to the community. But just see what it meant for me, a great discoverer, it is true, but an advocate of the eight-hour day, and a human being at the most. The white lead works are in another part of Bristol, and in a part where even that questionable boon, the local tramcar, does not penetrate. So another walking tour was evolved ere my task was ended.

But there is more behind. Messrs. Hare are not content with being makers of oilcloths in the usual accepted sense of the term. Without any consideration for the feelings of the man who was one day (if he lived) to write a history of their works—they weave their

own canvas. Of course this factory is in another part of Bristol. I was callous by this time, and took this quite as a little matter of course. But when I found that the manufacture of linoleum was one of their most important departures, I felt foot-sorely inclined to take mine. Fortunately for that portion of the world's inhabitants who wish to know a thing or two more than they have already acquired, I was not physically capable of going away. So I remained, and smiled the sickly smile of the unbelieving Celestial, and took notes and things pretty much as they came.

And it is in this way that I was inveigled into undertaking with that pure light-hearted and headness so characteristic of my tribe, about the biggest thing in circumlocutory works' inspection ever undertaken by mortal man. I rose to the occasion (early every morning for a week), and my task, all but the writing of it, is ended.

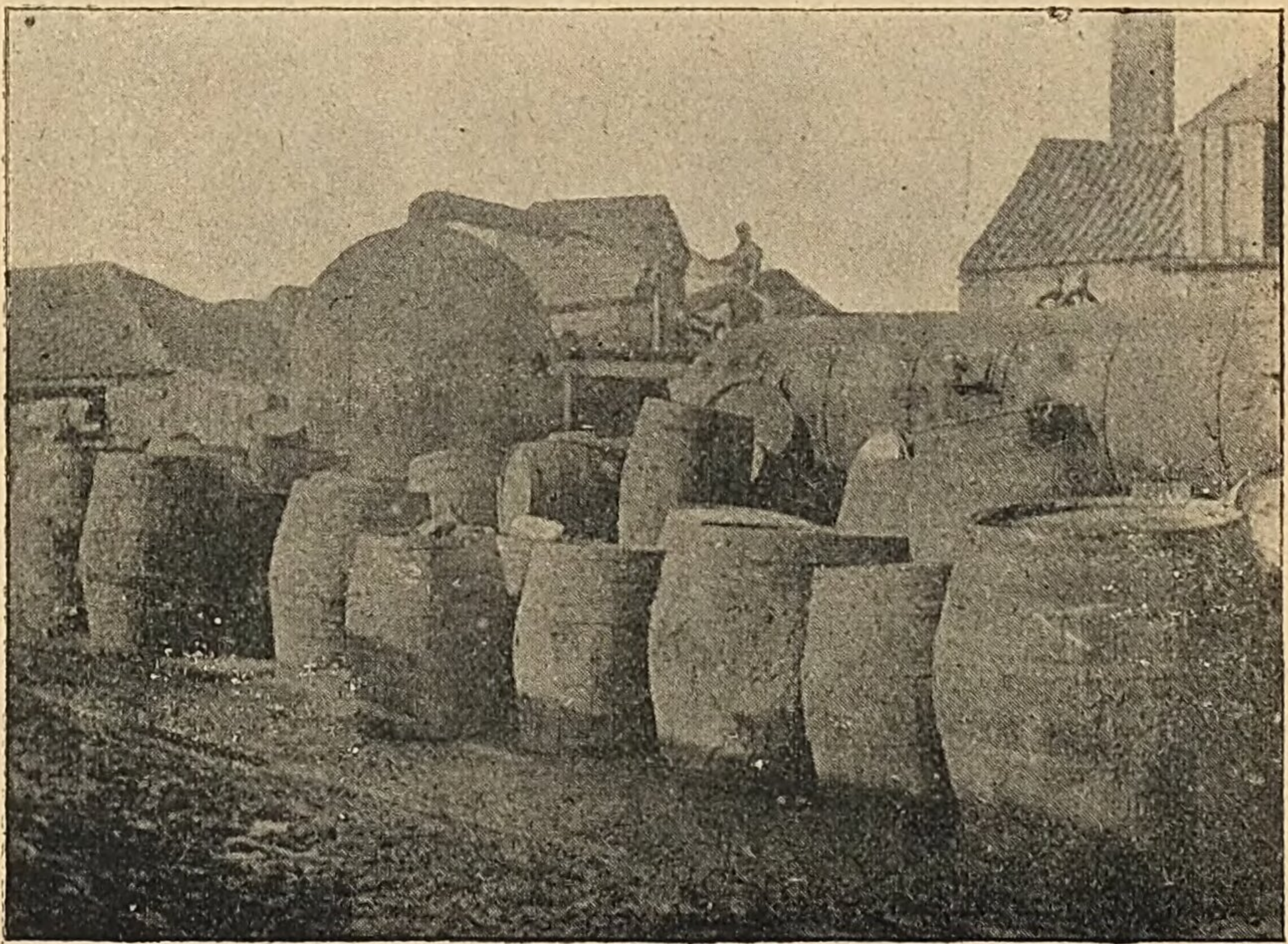


MR. CHARLES BOWLES HARE, J.P.

I was shown round by Mr. Tuckett. Mr. Tuckett is able to take long steps. He is permanently possessed of the belief that man has but little time here below and must step that little long. Mr. Tuckett has never gone in for walking as a profession. This is good for the present holder of the championship, and for the firm of J. Hare & Co. But all the same, it was not too good for me. It was true that there were acres of it; but the manner in which I was raced over these works was something to make angels weep. But the cynic who classifies authorship among the sedentary professions should be put on to such "little matters." I admit it would be a cruel punishment. But he would deserve it. It is over now. One of these days I may be able to walk again. My recuperative powers are very strong.

Everything must have a beginning, and the source of most paints is the mysterious and

rather awesome material known as white-lead. My daily peregrinations in connection with this little matter on one occasion took me to the parish of St. Phillip's, in which the firm's white-lead works are situated. Here the process of turning the ordinary blue pig-lead into white-lead is carried on. One would think that the paints made by the firm "in another place" would come in here, but one would be mistaken. Although the lead is not dyed, the change is not a lively one to witness. There is the heaviness of the leading constituent over it all. The system employed for the metamorphosis is the oldest, and yet the best, known. It is dubbed the Dutch process. The lead in its piggish form is carefully selected, for only the finest — what I might term, the primest "pig" is used for the making of white-lead. This pig-lead is then melted in furnaces, and is moulded into shapes and carefully placed over earthenware pans, into which acid is poured assiduously. It is then "put to bed" — for, of course, the white-lead stage is still in its infancy.

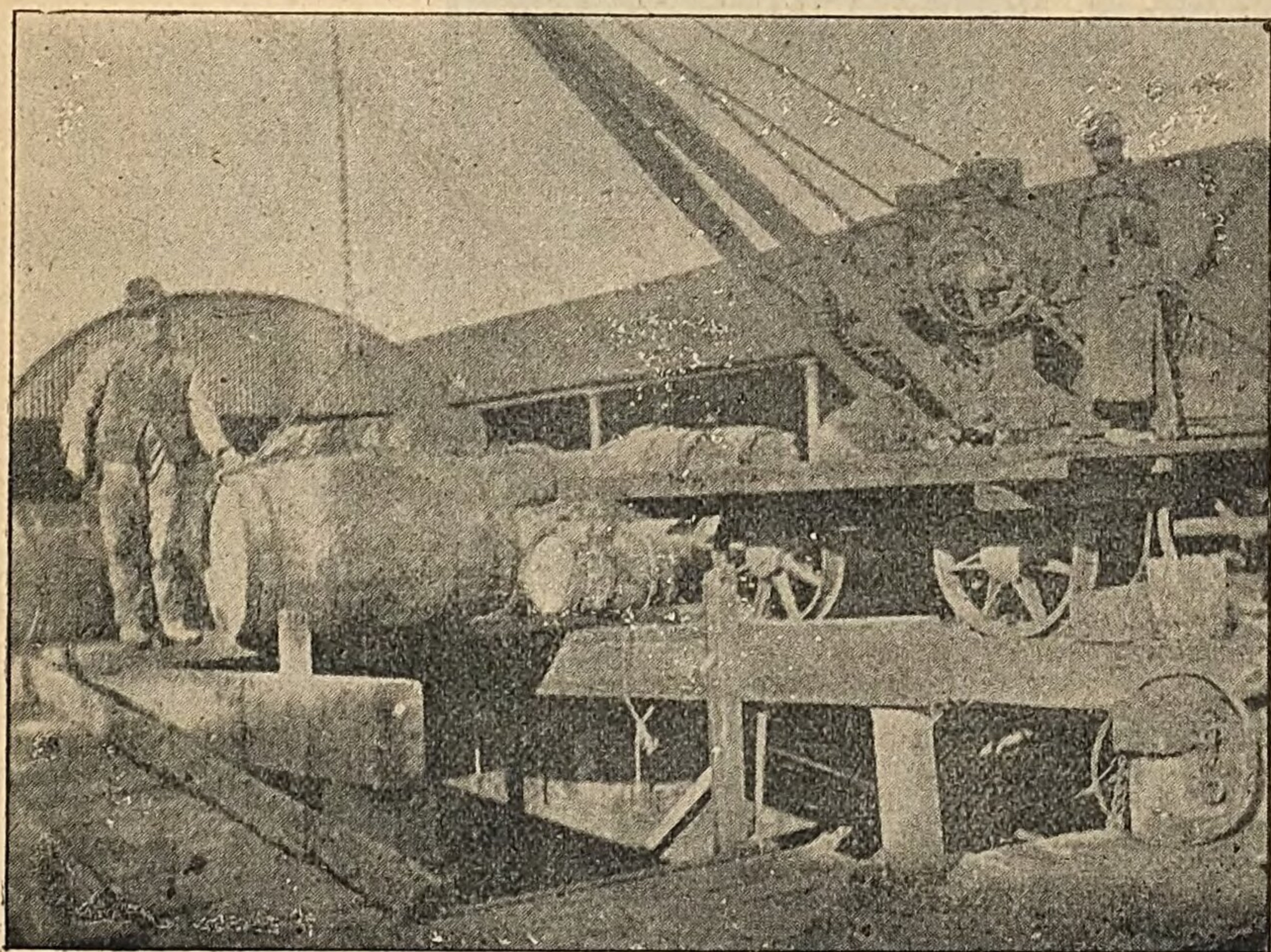


OIL-REFINING.

I then discovered what some eighteen large square brick buildings contained within these works, were doing there. These have only one way in — like the entrance to Paradise. But my guide, the courteous and obliging Mr. Tuckett, soon made me as wise on this matter as the most experienced of men. The treated pieces of lead are placed into these brick cemeteries in layers. On the top of each layer is a backer of plank, which again is covered with lots of tan. This operation is repeated until the building is nearly filled, each of them holding from 50 to 100 tons of lead. The heat engendered is very great, and as the whole remains like this for some months, the result is the anticipated one. The whole nature of the lead is changed. It is hard and dry and carbonaty. So it is put into water and washed, so that any out-of-place pieces of blue lead or tan are

carefully removed. It is then passed through a series of flat grinding stones, and is transformed into a white pulp, which, after settling down, is dried in stoves, and becomes the product known as white-lead. As a pigment it is universally in demand. It is also utilised by the Staffordshire people for the manufacture of the glaze for the china and other ware of that county of big pots.

White-lead is evidently not a good thing to eat, and not a harmless thing to make. The Government insist upon great precautions being taken with regard to the people employed in its manufacture, which is a very good thing as far as it goes. But the Government leave it to the firm to see that their hands comply with the regulations made for their protection, and a nice job they have of it. It appears that a strong hot bath must round off the white-lead maker's week. Now as would be expected from our

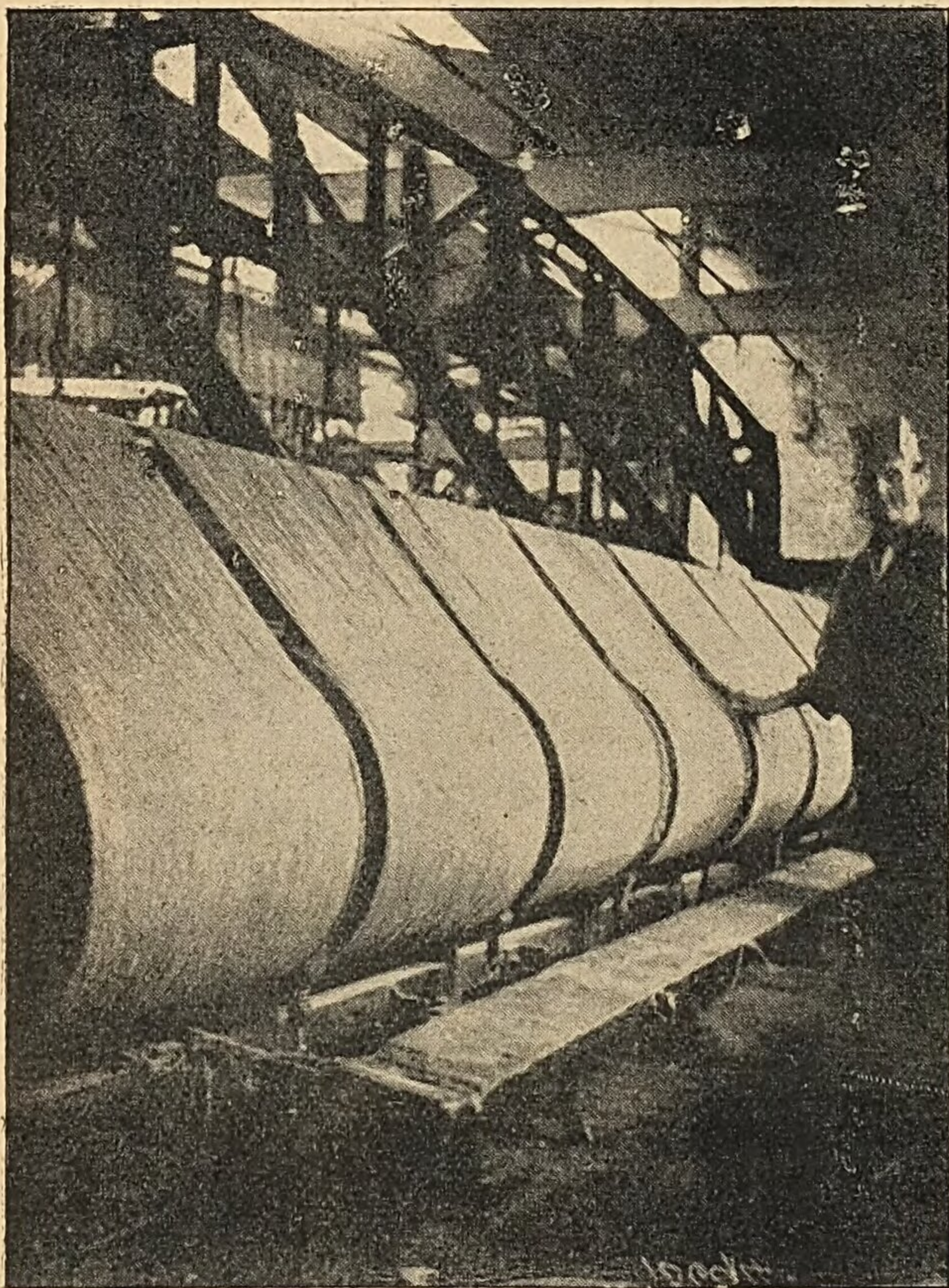


STACKING REFINED OILS.

democratic sons of toil, the order of the bath is an objectionable one. It is an order that is only carried out by a liberal application of "sponging," for the men have literally to be "tipped" into their tubs. They don't mind the danger, but they do mind the bath. If washing was as compulsory among our workers as the illimitability of their working-day, what an all-round mighty universal thing in strikes there would be, to be sure!

I was then taken to the colour-works. These cover a site of some three acres, which is a sight too much I think. The white-lead is brought from the works I have just left (in spirit) in iron boxes, containing nearly one ton each. These are not very large, for a ton of lead is naturally very heavy. In white and tinted colours white-lead plays the chief part. For the vision of tanks of gloriously hued liquids, in the variety of which our much

similied rainbow is completely outclassed, I have to thank, after Messrs. Hare, crude earths in the one place, die-woods in another, and chemicals in another. These tanks are contained in quite a number of separate buildings and sheds situated in the main yard. In one building the firm make their "lakes." Those in Cumberland were supplied by another firm. "Lakes" are the essence of fine colour. Bubbling in one corner was a big boiler, in which Sapan wood was indignantly boiling over. This makes several fine "lakes" of different shades. For instance, bright lake, mahogany lake, and rose pink are got out of this inconsistent wood by different treatment.



WEAVING THE CANVAS.

particular merits of this particular product. I was more surprised than I ought to have been on hearing that the big vat was the river Avon, and that I was walking along its banks to another portion of Messrs. Hare's works.

On my journey I passed thousands of barrels stored all over the huge yards, and containing hundreds of tons of rosin and tar. Then we came to some sheds, in which were large quantities of washed earth of different colours, and from which all unsuitable matter had been eliminated. This is drawn out in pipes, and carried along troughs to

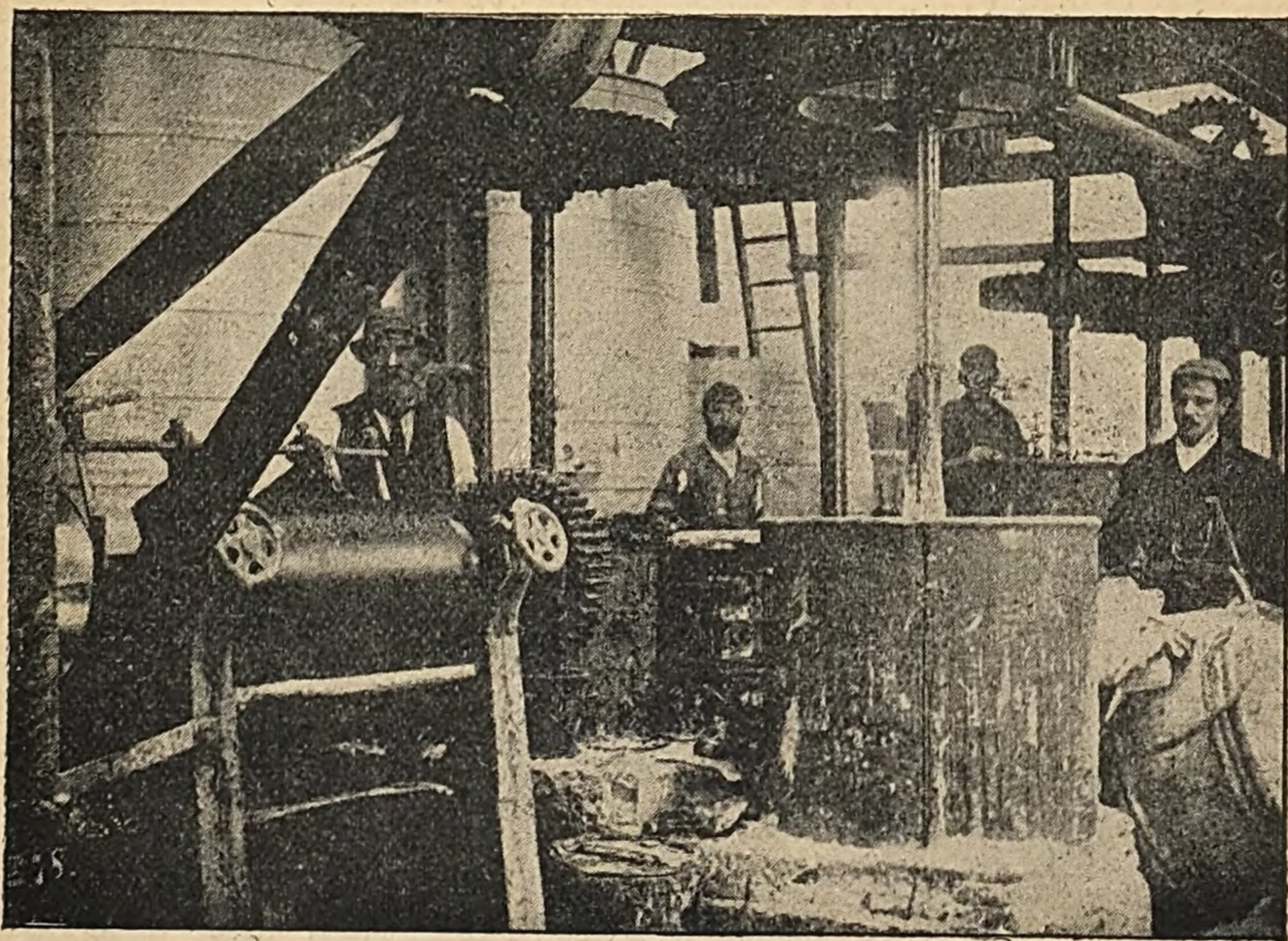
Then the chrome room. Here were being produced yellows of all shades, from the palest primrose to the deepest orange. Near by, is an enormous vat filled with pure blue, which is not supplied by Reckitt's. This is a chemical production, like foreign wines—hence the saying, "drinking till all is blue."

Then the drying room. The walls here are covered with shelves, upon which are trays containing the colour in paste, and which is being dried by a large stove in the centre of the apartment. I found this a very warm shop.

Then I was taken a walk along the side of an extraordinarily large tank. It was full of dark yellow paint, and the strong pungent smell emanating from it led me to expect a special explanation from my companion upon the

the outside, where it falls into pits, like poor human nature, and it remains there for some weeks. The colour proper, which is heavier than water, falls to the bottom, so by drawing the water off, it is get-at-able. It is then dried on heated brick tables. Here lay the ochre from which the different yellows are "evoluted"; here the common or back-garden species of iron ore, which supplies some glorious reds before it is done with. Reds are also produced from yellows and greens, by the application of heat.

After this, it is powdered by being placed in great mills, where it is ground into an impalpable state, and is then ready to be mixed with oils previous to its being sent out into the world pure unadulterated paint, equally the pride of builder, artist, and society lady.



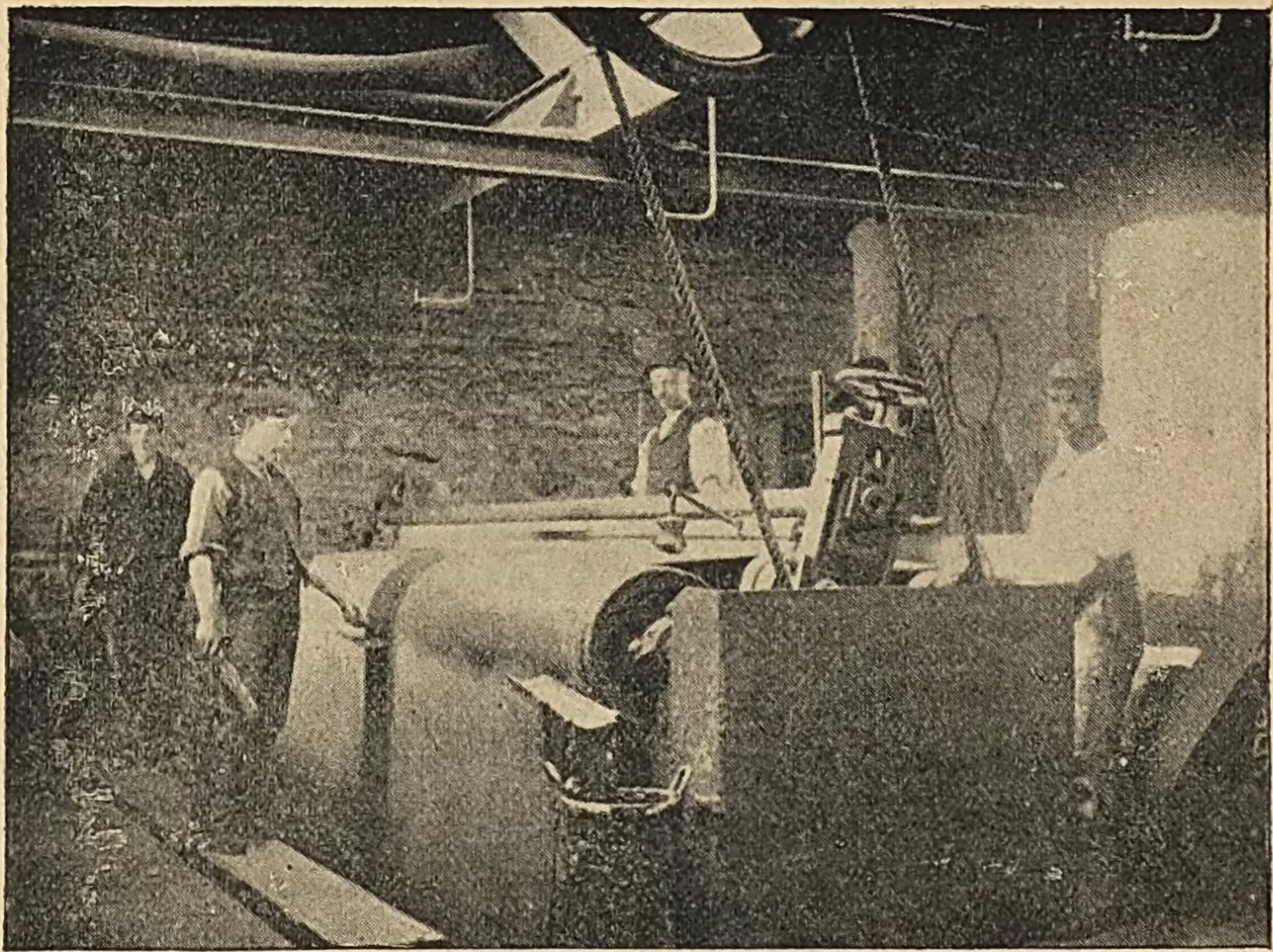
A COLOUR MIXING SHOP.

In enormous furnaces which are kept blazing night and day, the umber, which comes from Cyprus, and which furnishes the deep warm brown tints so largely used for tinting white-leads, is burnt to the proper shade.

I am not good at flowery descriptions, and a life among cities has not fitted me for dealing with horticultural subjects. But the "green house" of Messrs. Hare is not a matter to be passed by, or over. It is true it contains neither flower nor plant, barring a little machinery. But it is deserving all the notice I can give it if only because it contains enough arsenic to poison the whole of the thirty-six millions of home-grown fools Carlyle made historical. It is here that the glorious Emerald and Brunswick greens are manufactured. It is the least visited room in Bristol. Even the look-into-everything manager had never put foot inside this Blue Beard's chamber. But

jealous of the great feats of my departed namesake, I allowed the green-eyed monster to get the better of my discretion, and valorously ascended into the room and explored it and its deadly compounds. For the first time in my history a trace of green was to be discerned in my optic on emerging from the forbidden chamber. But my readers have no cause for congratulation. I was not one whit the worse for my daring deed.

The tedium of describing the manufacture of the myriad other things made by this firm must not be drawn out. I shall, therefore, say nothing about the varnishes, the coal-tar, the resin distillery, the stains, the oils of every kind and class and refinement, the Brunswick-black, and the similar things in which the house of Hare do much trade and amass much lucre. It is enough that I saw all these things with my own eyes,



OIL-CLOTH PAINTING MACHINE.

and have irretrievably ruined my best suit of clothes. An immaculately black pair of trousers have entered into an active competition with the brightest of Scotch tartans, and my once spotless coat contains enough oil upon its surface to smooth the roughest waters ever ruffled.

And now we will leave the oil and colour works, and take on another "little matter."

Hares are among the largest makers of floor-cloths in the world. They are also indisputably the oldest. It is over a century since the founding of this Bristol house by Mr. John Hare, the great-great-grandfather of the present head of the concern. Mr. John Hare was among the first who conceived the idea of painting canvas for

other than Academy-hanging purposes. Oilcloth has of late years been greatly superseded by linoleum, a change in which this firm have had as much to do as any other, for they are large makers of the newer cloth; but the wearing qualities of the older product are still greater than any other trodden-upon material. Every stage of oilcloth making is gone through by the firm. In this they hold, I believe, an absolutely unique position among oilcloth makers. Their large flax mills are situate in St. Philip's Marsh. Here I saw large quantities of flax and hemp, freshly imported from Russia. This is spun into yarn of various thicknesses, and woven in looms which are the largest in the world, and kept me a silent, awe-struck beholder for some time. In these looms the shuttle is thrown 24 ft., and the piece of canvas that is woven measures, when finished, 150 yards long and 8 yards wide. Each piece of canvas I have calculated



A FLOOR-CLOTH PRINTING ROOM.

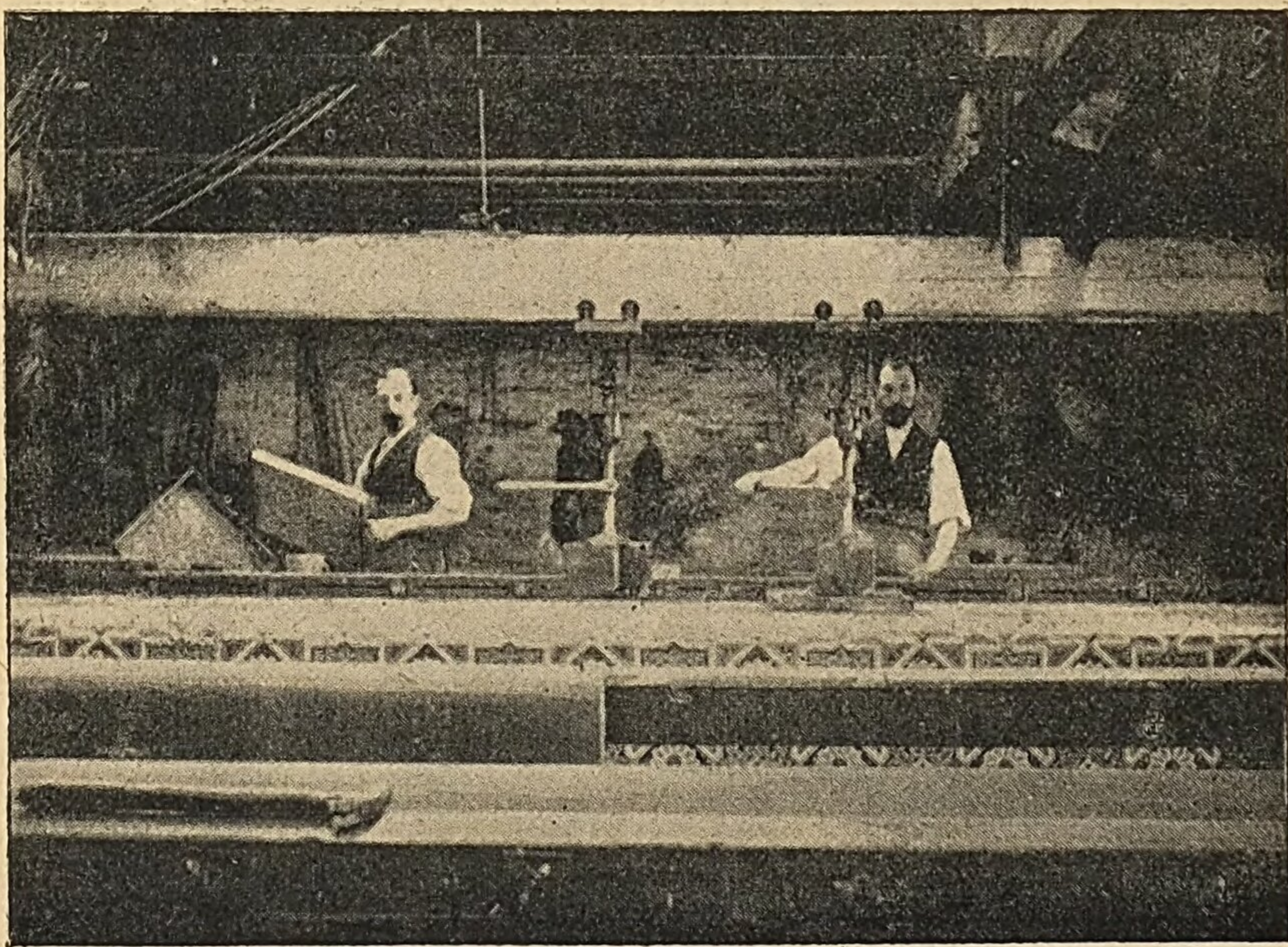
would cover over a quarter of an acre of ground, and a multitude of sins, and is minus seam or joint. It is then ready to receive its Joseph's coat of paints of many colours and strangely wonderful designs.

And here the scene is changed. One of the largest blocks of factories in even big-firmed Bristol is devoted to the painting, stamping, and drying of floor-cloths. These buildings are of enormous height, and are objects calling for much admiration and great climbing powers. But this is a painful subject, and I will let it pass.

There are two processes in use here for painting floor-cloths. That most extensively employed is the one in which the layers are "trowelled" by hand. When this process is completed the cloth is transferred to the printing-locks. The canvas receives coat after coat of paint, one covering following the other as soon as the last one has sufficiently

dried to allow of further treatment. In one of these lofts there were six enormous tables along which the cloth is drawn, folding over at one end and dropping as it is operated upon into the dizzy depths of the 80 or 90 ft. of room below.

The "stamping" is done by square wood blocks, each mathematically designed to present when applied to the cloth the particular colour it is employed to put on. This is a singularly pretty feature of the manufacture, and provides the cloth with its pattern. Every colour has a separate print. The different colours are spread upon padded tables, which are fed by boys. The block is placed on the cloth and pressed down firmly by a lever and screw arrangement which travels up and down the table. As many as three men are at work upon one spread of cloth, each one following up the other with the next colour. From three to ten or eleven reprints are required to finish a pattern of floor-cloth.



LINOLEUM PRINTING.

Row after row is printed (in squares of 18 in.), and is passed over the table until the whole 34 yards is finished. It is then nailed on to the poles from which it is suspended, and hangs until it is fit to be taken and laid down. It takes several months to season a finished oilcloth.

And now the other process. This is aided by machinery, but is only employed on cloths of the cheaper qualities. The "trowelling" is done automatically, the cloth passing over a series of rollers four yards in length, and depositing the coats of paint as they revolve. It then passes down through a space in the flooring, and hangs over rollers to dry in the spacious depths of the room beneath. The canvas so treated is 300 yards in length. This is floor-cloth making by the mile.

The drying-rooms are, as would be expected, of vast dimensions. Here I looked up

into serried rows of huge cloths, representing hundreds of tons. Nothing more strikingly impressed me with the immensity of this firm's productive powers than the walk round these wonderful rooms. The mere male man feels small indeed, through contrast with these surroundings. For the cheaper qualities of cloth, artificial heat is introduced. But the feature of the firm's best floor-cloths is that they are dried naturally, hanging in sheets in the large buildings for six to nine months before they are considered hard enough to stand severe wear.

I visited the department where the colours are prepared for "facing" the canvas in the frames, preparatory to the printing. The colours are here ground and manipulated to the required shades for the various designs. The different pigments, being previously dried and powdered, are put into mixing tubs, where they are assimilated with oil and different metallic dryers. These are incorporated as thoroughly as Bristol itself, and then are passed through shoots into mills, by which they are finely and finally ground. Having been through the mill, they are resigned to the fate in store—that of being applied to the canvas in the way I have already described.

Within recent times there has arisen a new king over floor-cloths, and he knows no rival. His name is Linoleum. This useful material is compounded of two things, linseed-oil and powdered cork. Its advantages are warmth and cheapness. But it does not wear like oilcloth. Its manufacture is of the simplest. The two constituents are boiled and mixed, and the toffee-looking mixture is passed through cylinders and mangled out in the required thickness. The painting and patterning are the same operations as those of the oilcloth. All the linseed oil used is treated by Messrs. Hare, and the cork is powdered by some extraordinary machinery. The inflammable nature of this last operation is always being responsible for a small thing in fires, and pails of water are always in readiness in case of requisition, round this little isolated part.

Besides these great over-ground and over-grown buildings through which I have been taking my readers, the firm own enormous cellarage, which burrows underneath its great oil and paint works. Herein are contained many thousands of barrels of oils, tallow, and kindred materials. There are also extensive petroleum stores down at Lion Wharf, which are not as useful now as when they were built, in the days before the invention of petroleum tank-ships.

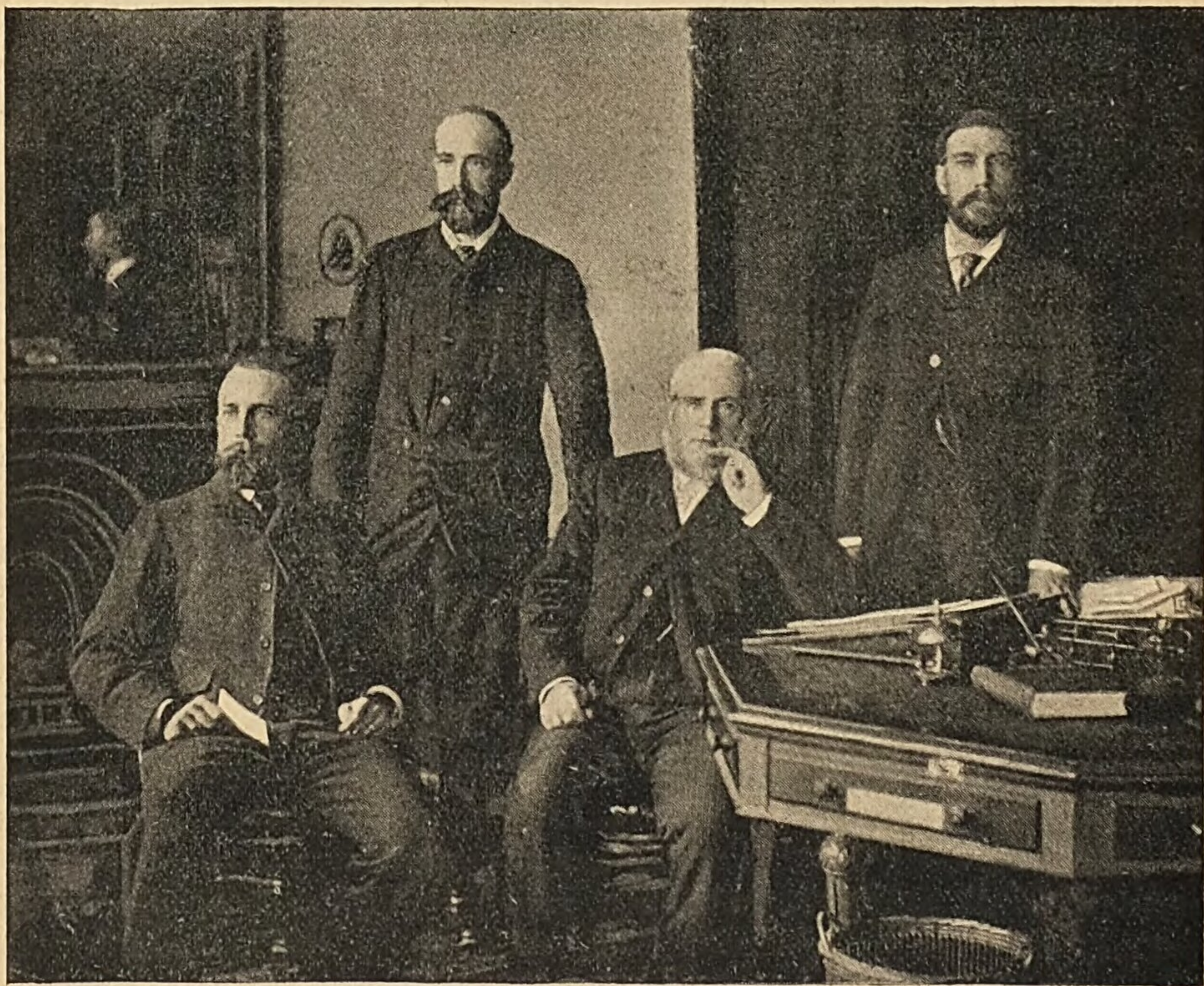
There are over 400 hands employed in Messrs. Hare's wilderness, and they all meet with their deserts. To every part of the world these different workshops contribute a supply of their famous products. And though I leave them weighed down with the fatigue of a superhuman effort, I feel that the insight gained into a myriad of interesting manufactures worth all the expenditure of muscle and shoe-leather the visit has caused me.

ON "ROBINSON'S."

IF "city of churches" was not appropriately available as a sort of bird's-eye-view description of Bristol, "city of bridges" would take priority of all other terms for the purpose. Its beautiful suicide-provoking suspension bridge has already received the

MR. ARTHUR ROBINSON.

MR. HENRY ADDISCOTT.

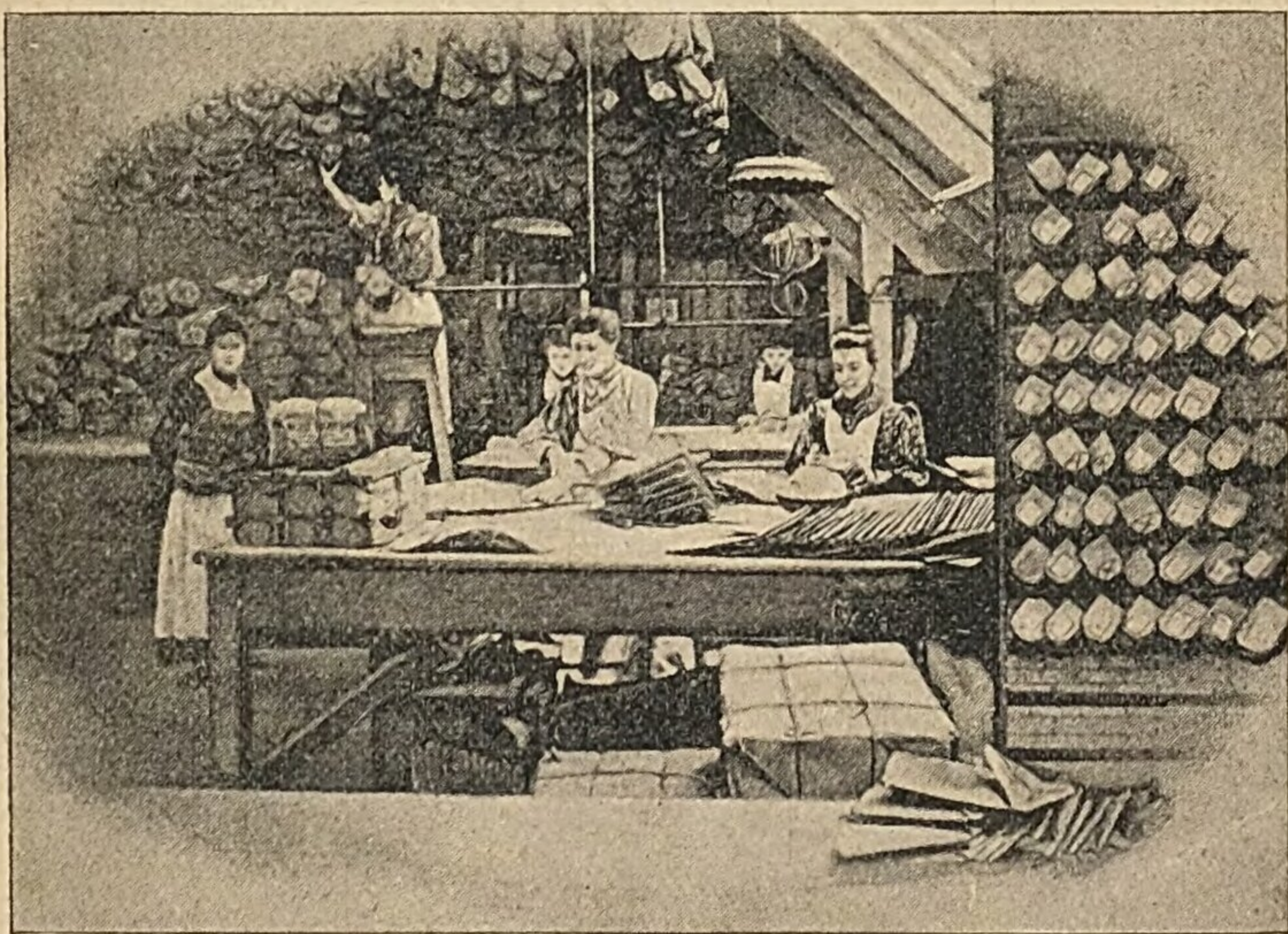


MR. EDWARD ROBINSON, J.P.

MR. ALFRED ROBINSON.

notice it deserves from me. Then there is the "drawbridge," which doesn't draw, and has not in fact an artistic line in its whole construction. But everything must have a specified limit, and the drawbridge in Bristol answers that purpose as far as the penny

tram fares are concerned. Then the next best known amphibious structure is that which bears the name of the city in which it is situated. Bristol Bridge forms a junction of streets which in London would be dubbed a circus. I will not say any hard things about the bridge itself. The associations of this unfortunate structure: its enforced proximity to the liquid putrefaction known locally as the river Avon, appeal with a hundred smells to my sympathetic senses, and prevents me from picking holes in its architectural points. Standing on the bridge, with your face carefully located to the windward, a busy scene is presented to the vision. Quite a large number of tramcars, 'buses, and pedestrians meet and part here and hereabouts, and you get your first view of one of the most distinctly handsome modern building to be seen in Bristol. It is situated at the corner of Redcliff and Victoria Streets, and its triangular shape admits of its exposing its imposing frontage to both thoroughfares. For a long time I wondered what the building represented. It was too



SUGAR-BAG MAKING.

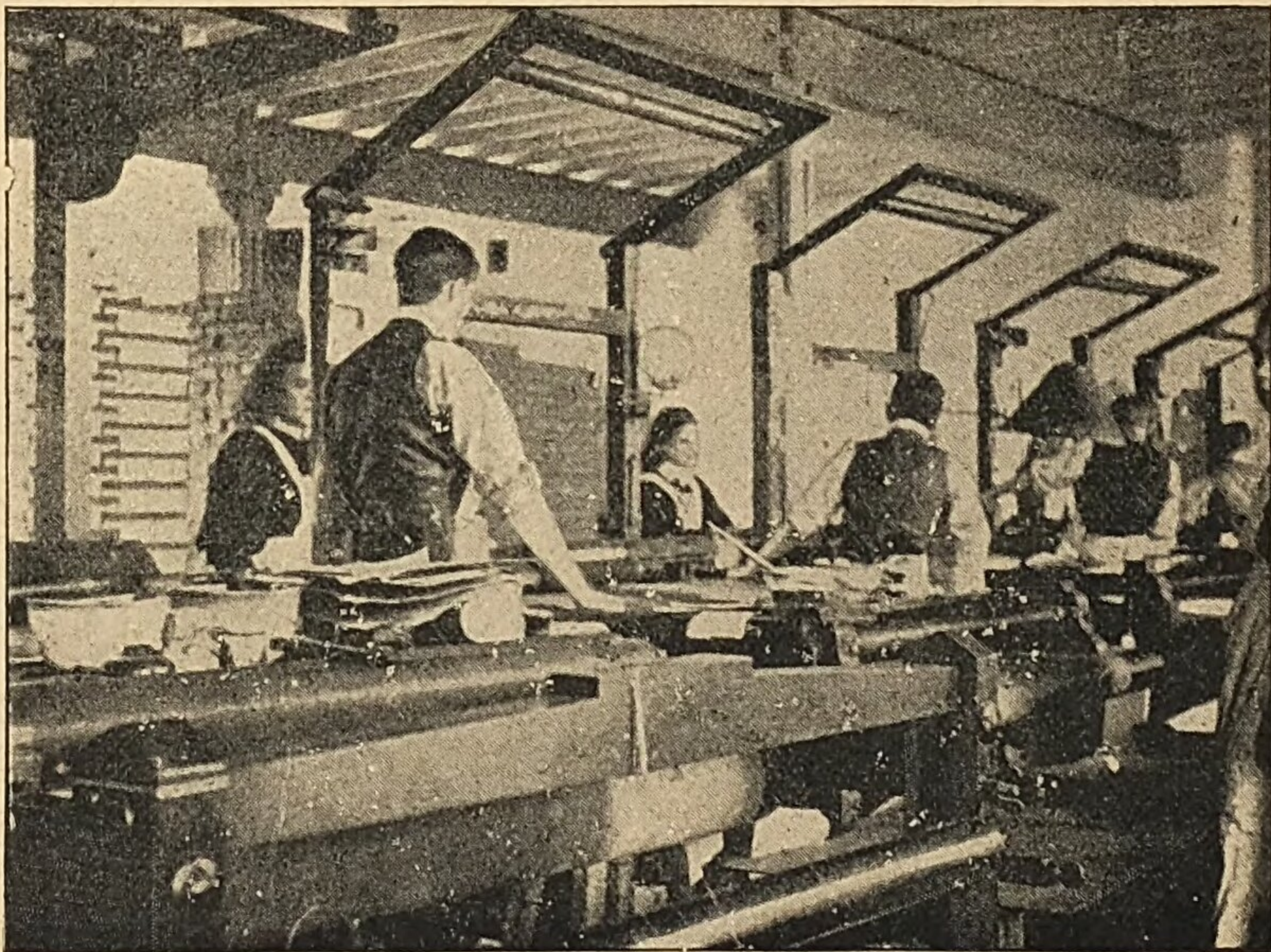
large for a theatre, too new for a cathedral, and if it was a church, it certainly could boast a novel thing in steeples. But it is not good for man to wonder long, so I acted as I would have done had I required to ascertain the hour of day—and asked a policeman.

“*Robinson's*,” replied he of the blue vestments: and struck up his beat with an air that testified to the honest contempt he felt for any one who did not grasp the full significance and conclusiveness of what I certainly considered a somewhat enigmatic reply. I smiled the sickly smile of a man who doesn't understand and doesn't like to say so, and awaited another opportunity—or policeman. “Could it be *the Robinson*?” I ruminated. I knew the only Jones worth knowing; Mr. Brown was one of my oldest friends; could I have stumbled across the original of the third of that much quoted triumvirate?

It was another and an older policeman this time, and he was walking past me with that kingly air which only the protector of our persons and properties can assume in its

completest perfection. Him I queried as to what the pile represented. He replied me, "*Robinson's*,"—and continued his awe-provoking ramble with the feeling that o'ertook Longfellow's Village Blacksmith at the end of his week's labours. It was evident that in Bristol, the force was no remedy. Desperate states require desperate treatment for their amelioration, so I crossed the roadway, and entered the portals of the mysterious unknown.

All around me were large offices, in which many brothers of the pen were spilling ink. It certainly was not a church. There was no one asleep, no one having all the say: in fact, an air of doing something useful pervaded all alike. No,—it certainly was not a church. There was quite a business-like brusqueness about the way in which I was asked what could be done for me: and feeling very much as Daniel must have felt when *he*



COLOUR-RULING MACHINES.

was seeing the lions, I expressed a desire to see "*Robinson*," and took my chance as to his showing any desire to see me.

I saw "*Robinson*." In fact I saw two "*Robinsons*." I hasten to add that I am a total abstainer. It is so easy for one's remarks to bear a double meaning; it does not do to leave oneself open to misconception. Both the "*Robinsons*" were available and amiable. If they were sorry I had called, they did not show it. They even went so far as to say that they were pleased to see me, which was certainly trying my credulity unreasonably. But in giving me the desired information as to who or what "*Robinson's*" was, they were worth more to my inquisitive mind than a whole *posse* of police could possibly be.

It transpired that I had paid a visit to yet another of Bristol's great industries. I was

in the premises—or rather, one of the premises, of E. S. & A. Robinson & Co., one of the largest paper-bag making and printing firms in the world. Now paper bags are interesting objects. I have frequently had such things in my hands, and only the interest fostered in their contents prevented my devoting as much consideration to the method of their manufacture as its importance deserved. The paper bag is the only thing in life you get for nothing—except good, as opposed to six-and-eightpenny advice. As an object of interest, it has a claim upon a bill and tax-paying humanity transcendently greater than any other and non-gratuitous thing. Life without its paper bag would not now be worth its paper-money purchase. It fills up a void in our terrestrial state, quite as much as it is itself a void to be filled, and in certain such cases, not a thing to be avoided.

Luckily, my interest in paper bags was now sufficiently aroused to allow of my expressing a desire to view the process of evolution which every well-made bag must



BOOK BINDING.

undergo. Fortunate also it was that my friends "Robinson's" acceded to my wish. And the world may now if it chooses, know more about the mysteries of its paper bag than it has been accustomed to know—or to care about.

I was taken down deep into the basement of this wilderness of an edifice. Huge piles of paper in all its brown, Jones—I mean brown and other forms, were piled up in quantities that I cannot hope to definitely convey to the reader. There were hundreds upon hundreds of tons of paper in these mighty store rooms. It was a perfect sea of paper. There was paper, paper everywhere. Enough paper, I thought in my ignorance, to make all the bags one part of the world could give to the other part, for centuries to come. This place I was in was a veritable paper castle: a statement which is not intended to reflect one iota upon the lasting qualities of the materials used in its

construction. One cellar—for there are quite a number of these subterranean apartments—contained 200 to 300 tons of one quality of brown paper.

After the foregoing came the process of bag-making itself. There are several well-lighted, clean, comfortable workrooms devoted to this. There are two processes—machine and hand. It is rather surprising to find that there are still certain kinds of bags that cannot be made as well by mechanical appliances as by hand: especially if you watch those wonderful specimens of ingenuity—the bag machines, at work. There are several of these at “Robinson’s,” all of the same type. At one end a big bobbin of paper is placed, and this is spun off in a straight sheet—is folded and shaped as it passes its swift way along—is then pasted, cut, and then dried, by a rapid revolution round a big wheel supplied with hot air for the purpose. It is all so very quick, all so very beautiful, so exceedingly clever, that it is hard to leave these delightful mechanical constructions. And



ARTISTS AT WORK.

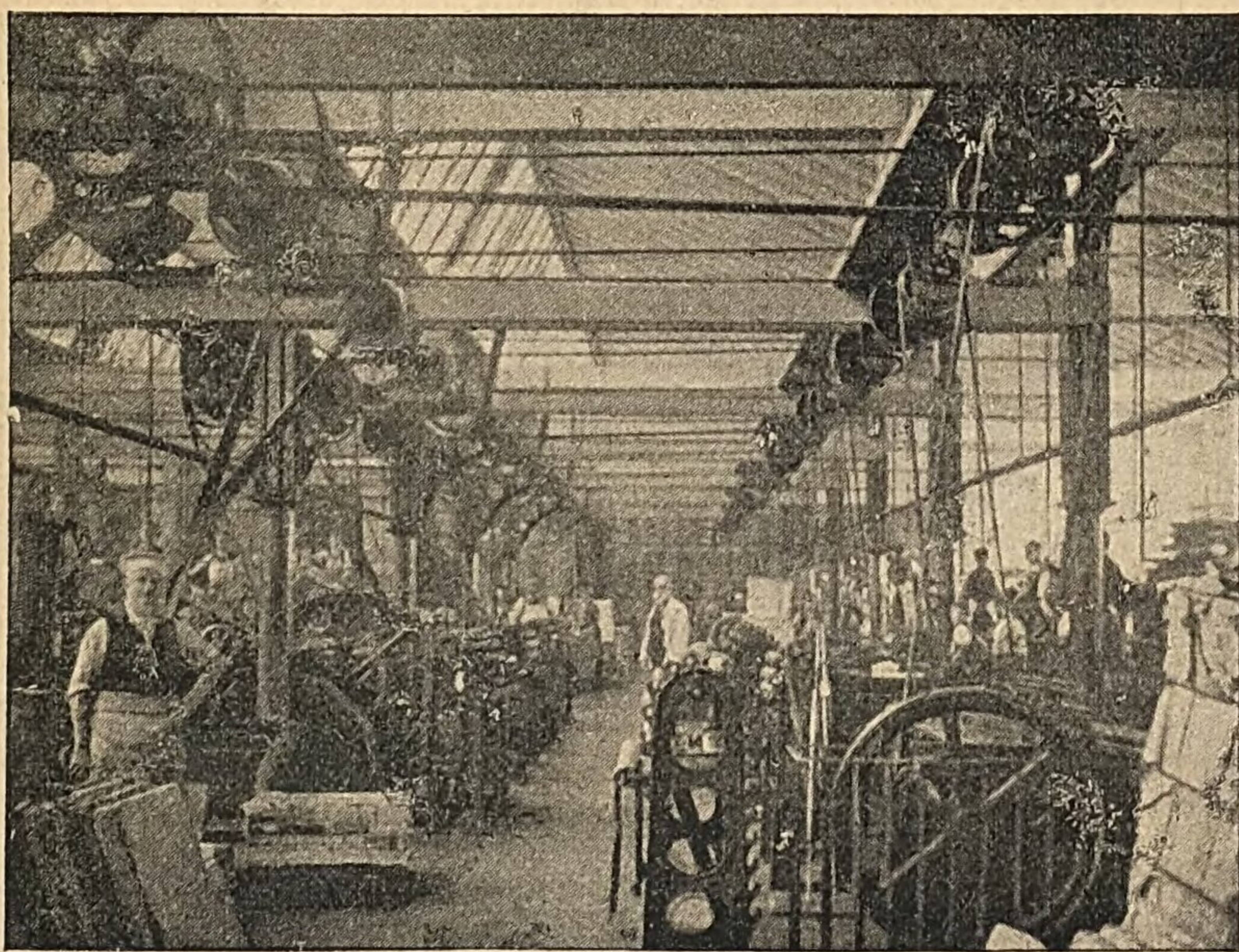
that is how flour and biscuit bags are made, and turned out ready for use at the rate of 100 to 200 bags per minute.

Now, sugar-bag making, which is a speciality with “Robinson’s,” is quite a different sort of thing. These are nearly all brought up by hand. In the rooms set apart for this branch of the business, are relays of mostly-good-looking and neatly-dressed girls, who deftly knock the paper into shape with the aid of a tin “shaper;” another lot of girls paste them on a truly wholesale scale, and the sugar-bag, which evidently has special features to require such a special treatment, is *un fait accompli*. Brown paper bags are also made by hand. The material is too stubborn to yield to the gentle pressure of the patent machines.

The late Mr. Elisha Robinson, who founded the firm in 1844, who started with nothing, and lived to be both Mayor of, and Member of Parliament for, his native city, and die one of its wealthiest and most influential citizens, was very proud of his

bag-making. He always carried a paper bag in his pocket: and long after the growth of the firm and the absorption by it of kindred industries had given it a right to pose as leader in other things than bag-making, he would frequently bring out the paper bag and proudly say, "*That is what I make; that is my business.*" There are good things to be found in and said about even empty paper bags. It is worthy of mention, in connection with the foregoing, that the firm is now under the management of its founder's brother, Mr. Alfred Robinson, who has taken a very active part in the conduct of the business almost from its commencement, in conjunction with the two sons of the deceased gentleman, Messrs. Edward and Arthur Robinson, and Mr. Henry Addiscott, who has been a partner since 1885.

And though I have to describe my experience of many other departments in



COLOUR-PRINTING ROOM.

"Robinson's," this is a fitting place in which to pay the firm a well-meant tribute—which has no direct connection with their paper bags. Nothing pleased me so much in my visit as the beautifully spick and span condition of workrooms, workers, and materials worked. I am not exaggerating when I say that, given no special advantage upon the score of cleanliness as far as their special manufacture is concerned, a more comfortable, more pleasing to watch, smarter, comelier, neatlier-dressed body of girls, are not to be found in any factory in England. The rooms themselves are large, well-ventilated, and well-lighted, the workers appear to have every convenience, and the perfect order which prevails still permits their accompanying their deft labours with snatches of well-rendered songs and choruses. If I had not been the modest man I unfortunately am, with a never-ending fear of having my motives misconstrued, I should have liked to have lingered

among these perfect patterns of cared-for workers a little longer. But the recollections of the pleasure I felt at what I witnessed are still mine, and are not likely to leave me soon. I know of daily work being carried on under such shockingly inhuman conditions that I make more of such an example than would, under a better social organisation than our own, be considered necessary.

After the bags are made they are strung up into small lots of twenty-five, and then made up into bundles of 500—or in such other proportions as make them convenient parcels for handling. And now we come to the printing of them.

The bags are printed before they are made, for obvious reasons, with the exception of machine-made bags, in which are included the kinds for flour, biscuits, and lump-sugar. The printing rooms of the firm are numerous. For as printers and its attendant trades,



ALMANAC DEPARTMENT.

“Robinson’s” have no equal in the west counties. This scene of operations is a mightily imposing one. Dozens of huge machines are at work, with a clatter and a clang which does not stop for one moment, except, as the Irishman said—during the dinner hour. Of course, there is nothing much to describe here. Everybody is accustomed to the methods employed in Caxton’s wonderful gift to posterity. There is therefore no need for me to recapitulate a too familiar tale. The printing machines at “Robinson’s” are all furnished with an ingenious contrivance which lifts up and then puts down the paper printed, by suction. This is the invention of one of the firm’s managers, Mr. James Hird. Then I went in quick succession through the firm’s engraving rooms, litho rooms, bronzing and gilding rooms, cutting and ruling rooms, and so on, *ad infinitum*. There never was such a place for rooms. In all of these I saw hundreds of orders in a state of being executed:

which is especially true anent the cutting-rooms, where a number of gigantic guillotines were actively employed on their unusually bloodless business. The ruling machines are delightful in their very simplicity. The man who invented these was a genius. The man who could adequately describe the manner in which these ruling powers work would be another. Needless to say I am not equal to the task. I must draw a line myself here, and pass on to the next room.

Bookbinding in all its many stages is going on here. The making of every description of ledger is a speciality of "Robinson's," who cannot be brought to book under this heading. For their ledgers are excellent. The numbering machines I saw in this department are fine pieces of mechanism. They are equal to anything from one to one short of a million. As regards the variety of the books made here, everything from a



ENVELOPE MAKING.

penny pocket-book to a 2,000-page banker's ledger is equally at the command of the house's resources.

In the binding, the paper is folded to size for sewing, put into the required quantities, then sewn and then bound. The "boards" are then fixed, and they are covered with cloth or calf as the case may be. There is no kid about the latter. And that finished the first lesson I learnt at "Robinson's."

I lived to come another day. There was no help for it. "Robinson's," it appears, are divided as a firm; in other words, they have another huge factory down Bedminster way, where their colour-printing, chromo-lithography, and such-like work is executed. Almanacks are a feature here. There was no help for it, as I was saying, and down to

Bedminster went this seeker after knowledge. I was not in a hurry, so I took a tramcar, and in due course reached my destination.

Robinson's Bedminster factory is a big one-storied place, covering an acre of ground, and forming one magnificent interior. I was met here by Mr. James Hird, the inventor of the "sucking" appliance mentioned a bit ago, and who manages this department of the business. The room is not only large, it is very clean and well-lighted. From sides and roof light finds its unchecked way in. In the centre, a raised office with glass walls is fixed, from whose interior Mr. Hird can survey the many busy workers whom he controls. The larger portion of the big work-shop is filled with a number of colour-printing machines,



CARD-BOARD BOX MAKING.

nearly all occupied in almanack production. Some of these almanacks are very beautiful. As many as eighteen different colours are necessary to evolve the finished picture, and I witnessed the whole series of these interesting operations. Many of these almanacks are veritable works of art. The very best pictures are used as subjects for the chromos, the firm paying regular visits to the Academy exhibitions for the purpose of buying new masterpieces when they can't get old masters for the purpose. I saw dozens of thousands of these handsome finished pictures in the store-room on one side of the building. The firm has wisely arranged accommodation for their artists in the upper stories of the central tower of their city premises. No less than twenty-seven artists are employed in these lofty

regions, accounting no doubt for the high art shown in their productions. Certainly we are advancing as an artistic people. The fact that this sort of thing is demanded, and that nothing inferior is considered good enough for even giving-away purposes, goes as far as I want it to go to establish the truth of this conclusion.

But this is not all, in spite of the last word of the last sentence. The firm make envelopes. Make them by the hundreds of thousands. In another portion of this colour-printing wilderness are several envelope machines. They are akin to our friend the sausage machine. The paper is put in at one side, it is gummed, and turned out at the

other a finished envelope, quicker than you can say "Jack Robinson," or, for the matter of that, Edward Robinson, or even Arthur Robinson. Each of these machines is capable of turning out 2,000 finished envelopes an hour. And a machine that is capable of doing that is capable of doing anything; so I will drop the subject.

This room is so big, that in a hitherto unnoticed corner I espied scores of tons of cardboard in evenly-cut boards, ready to take their turn in the box-making department. A large number of girls were making the boxes, which is a simple process. It is a case of cutting into strips, and pasting together—and the thing is done.

Now I'm fully aware that I have literally—if not very literarily—run through "Robinson's." That is "Robinson's" fault. A firm which has the hardihood to spring



FOREMEN AT "ROBINSON'S."

a small thing like this big factory as *a part of* their business on an unsuspecting and tired-out discoverer, must take the consequences. And that includes finding employment for some 800 workers, and the keeping up of one of the very oldest and most honourable reputations in Bristol—and out of it. Not to say anything of the travellers, of whom there are thirty, spreading abroad the doctrine of "Robinson's" superiority, with that free abandon and prodigality of imagination, which only "Knights of the Road"—and journalists—possess in their amplest and most convincing forms. In using the word "abroad," I have to explain that its meaning is narrowed to the inclusion of the British and Channel Islands. A *sine quâ non* to such a position at "Robinson's" is:—A modest exterior, combined with good address—and an ability to take orders.

Each department at "Robinson's" is superintended by a responsible foreman. An insight into the inner workings of the firm as affecting the feeling existing between employers and employed was obtained in a conversation I held with four of these



"ROBINSON'S" REPRESENTATIVES "ON THE ROAD."

gentlemen, and from which I gathered that a total of 156 years was reached by their united terms of service.

"Good afternoon, 'Robinson's,'" said I; and I shook hands with them both and went my way, an object lesson in the punishment that overtakes an unreasonable curiosity.

ON WAGONS.

MY greater namesake went down to the sea in ships, and made them the *vade mecum* of his wonderful discoveries. Nowadays, the railway train is an assistant to exploitation: and it is generally a slow and sure method—especially in Bristol. There are few of us who are unacquainted with rolling stock in a more or less intimate degree. For myself, I plead guilty to having spent most of my waking and many of my sleeping moments within the interior of such things. But it remained for my visit to Bristol to teach me for the first time of the methods pursued in the evolution of a fully-equipped railroad car, and most of those other things that run on wheels.

But in taking the reader as far as this, I have run through Lawrence Hill, a small station just outside Bristol proper. There are other ways of getting to Lawrence Hill. If one is pressed for time one walks: or should one possess an interest in the local tramway company, one would take a car, thus sacrificing oneself upon the altar of an increased dividend. I really am at a loss to understand what takes people to Lawrence Hill (apart from pedestrianism, car-ism, and railroad-ism). It is true that I had good cause for my visit; but then, everyone is not desirous of viewing wagon and carriage-building works! I was. And I did. And I am not likely to forget my experiences. But still, it does not do to leave overmuch to the memory, and I will haste me and jot down my recollections that you, dear reader, may the better judge.

Now the appearance of a great works that cover some twelve acres of ground is not usually an inviting one. There is the great gate-way for one thing, with its unwritten "*Abandon all hope of a lazy time all ye who enter here.*" And then there is the feeling about inspecting those twelve acres, which I could not get over without going over. My feet would at least add two achers to the twelve owned for manufacturing purposes by this big company, ere my visit was ended.

It would not be out of place here to give the usual dry-as-dust data associated with the past history of the firm and its present purposes. Consequently, it will come as a surprise to those of my readers who best know my ways, to find that I shall now proceed to give it.

As far back as the year 1851 saw the commencement of this business, in the usual modest style associated with present-day mighty Bristol enterprises. The founders were the late Mr. John Fowler, the inventor of the steam-plough, and Mr. Albert Fry, the present managing director. Mr. Fowler eventually left Bristol for Leeds, where he won

laurels in the field of agricultural engineering. The Bristol business was continued by Mr. Albert Fry, in conjunction with his cousin, Mr. Theodore Fry, who has been the member for Darlington for a longer period than I care to remember. In 1866 the latter gentleman left Bristol for the North, where he has remained. It was then resolved to turn the concern into a limited liability company. The difficulty of coping single-handed with the enormous increase of business, and, what was as important, of providing adequately for the demands that the great prospective increase would entail upon the resources of the firm, soon made it apparent to Mr. Albert Fry that outside help and outside means were necessary to assist him to take full advantage the future afforded of a greater trade. The opportunities for extension were so apparent, the likelihood of a future for the firm as makers of rolling stock—a demand for which was then in active circulation—that there was no difficulty in starting the company on the new basis, and the necessary great increase of capital was readily subscribed. The old works which were located in Temple Street had in the test been found wanting, and the present works at Lawrence Hill were built. The company had and still has Sir Joseph Weston as its chairman, and, as I have mentioned, the managing director's chair has ever since been filled by Mr. Albert Fry.

I ventured out on my tour of inspection, with all the comfort that the knowledge of several miles of walking ahead of me could inspire. The works at Lawrence Hill are really divided into two complete sections. The part I was now in was devoted to the larger department of the two, that of railway rolling-stock building. The other is some hundreds of yards away, and it is there that the construction of carts, wagons, carriages—everything from the royal landau to the coster's cart—from the nimble gig to the brewer's dray, the corporation water-cart to the carriage for the life-boat—in fact, every known description of two or four-wheeled road conveyance, goes merrily on.

But to take one thing at a time, and to continue with what I first intended to deal with.

Before leaving the offices, I had seen the drawing room, in which a number of draughtsmen were busily engaged in what is the seemingly doing-nothing occupation of their craft. Here all the plans of the work constructed by the company have their first inception. A general view of every separate carriage to be constructed is drawn out with the utmost of mathematical correctness, and every separate detail of which is again carefully re-drawn for the purpose of manufacture. It is all very interesting to watch, especially if you are not one of the draughtsmen, and therefore indifferent to the difficulties of getting one straight line a six-hundredth part of an inch more in accord with another straight line. Then there was the office sacred to the mysterious workings of that once-a-week interesting person—the cashier; and the offices of the secretary, the inspector, and the offices for estimates, share with the board-room the privilege of being sheltered by the same roof.

Then I started walking. It was not exactly a walking match. No, it was not that. I stopped here and there, and turned in and out in a most unprofessional pedestrian manner. But all the same, I think if the pedometer I wore on that day was not more unreliable than most of its kind, the record for distance in a given number of hours was broken by me. I am not proud of it. My breast is not rising in silent exultation

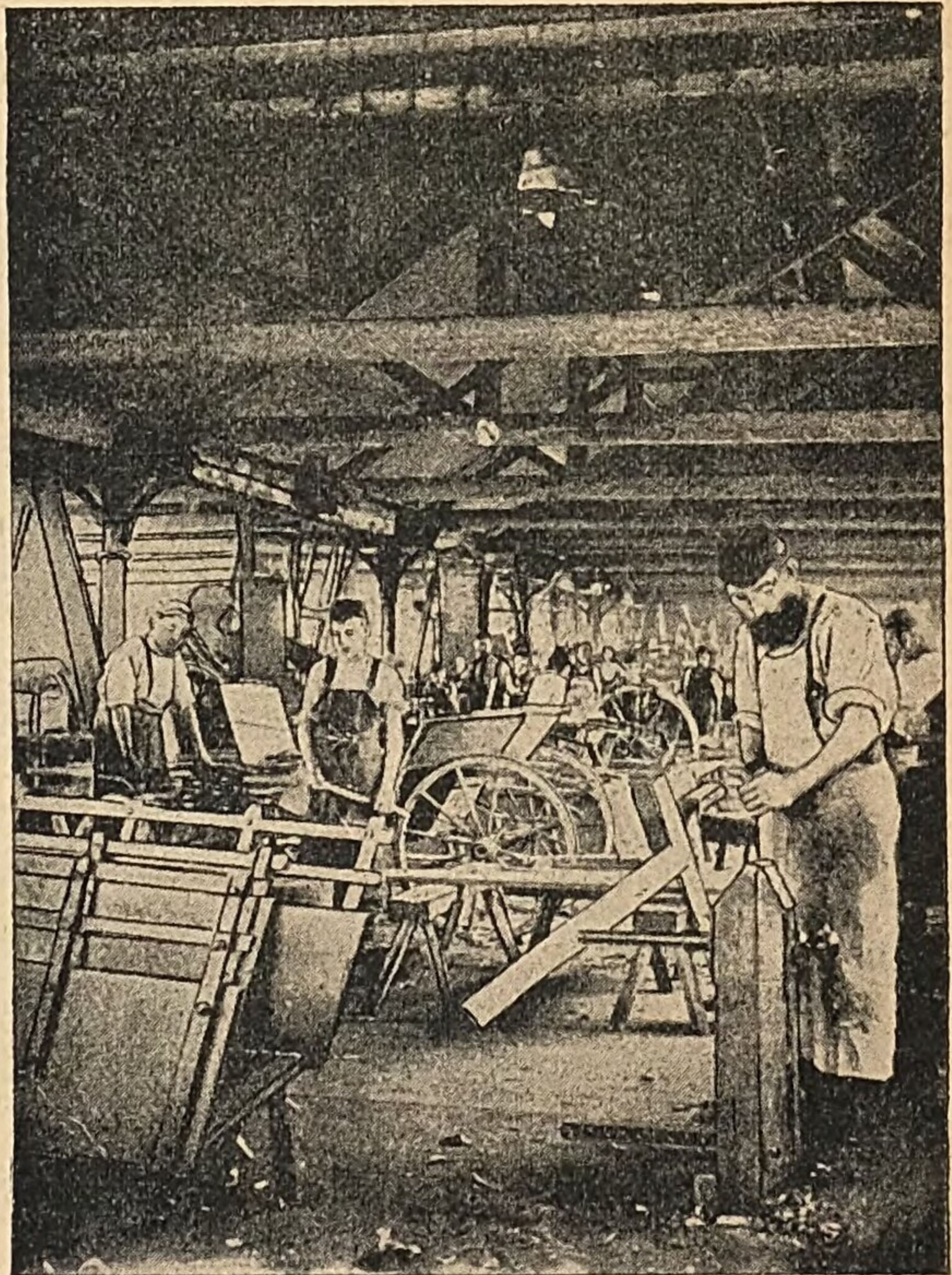
as I write these lines. It were hardly possible. For the worn-out condition of the only pair of shoes I came to Bristol with and in are still an unrepaid memory.

Traversing an open space of a few hundred of feet or so—it really doesn't matter how many—I came across the timber yards. The reader must imagine square pyramids—and these are something in themselves worthy of the most vigorous imagination—of timber in great planks of every degree of thickness, piled heavenwards in the dizziest fashion, and in length and breadth forming a veritable forest. This stock of wood covers a space of three to four acres, and doesn't seem to mind it a bit. When one considers how little ground space even a big person like myself takes up actually, and the airs one assumes in consequence, the modesty of this timber yard is beyond praise. Then adjoining these are the drying sheds of the firm, where the timber is stocked and kept for years, ere it is considered in sufficiently suitable condition to form the ingredients of a Bristol wagon company's carriage or cart. Like wine, wood is the better for keeping.

There is a great variety of timber used here, much of which comes from foreign lands, particularly for the manufacture of railway rolling stock. Teak is a favoured wood for rolling-stock construction, as the large percentage of oil contained in it prevents the insects, indigenous to every class of wood, from destroying it, as in the case of timber which has less of the preserving element in its composition. When required, this timber is taken in light railways which traverse the yards in all directions, and deposited in either of the two great

sawmills kept going in the works, according to the uses it is intended to be put to. The larger sawmill, which is devoted to the needs of the railway-stock work, contains the heaviest machinery, as the other is responsible for only the lighter work of the firm, that associated with its other department.

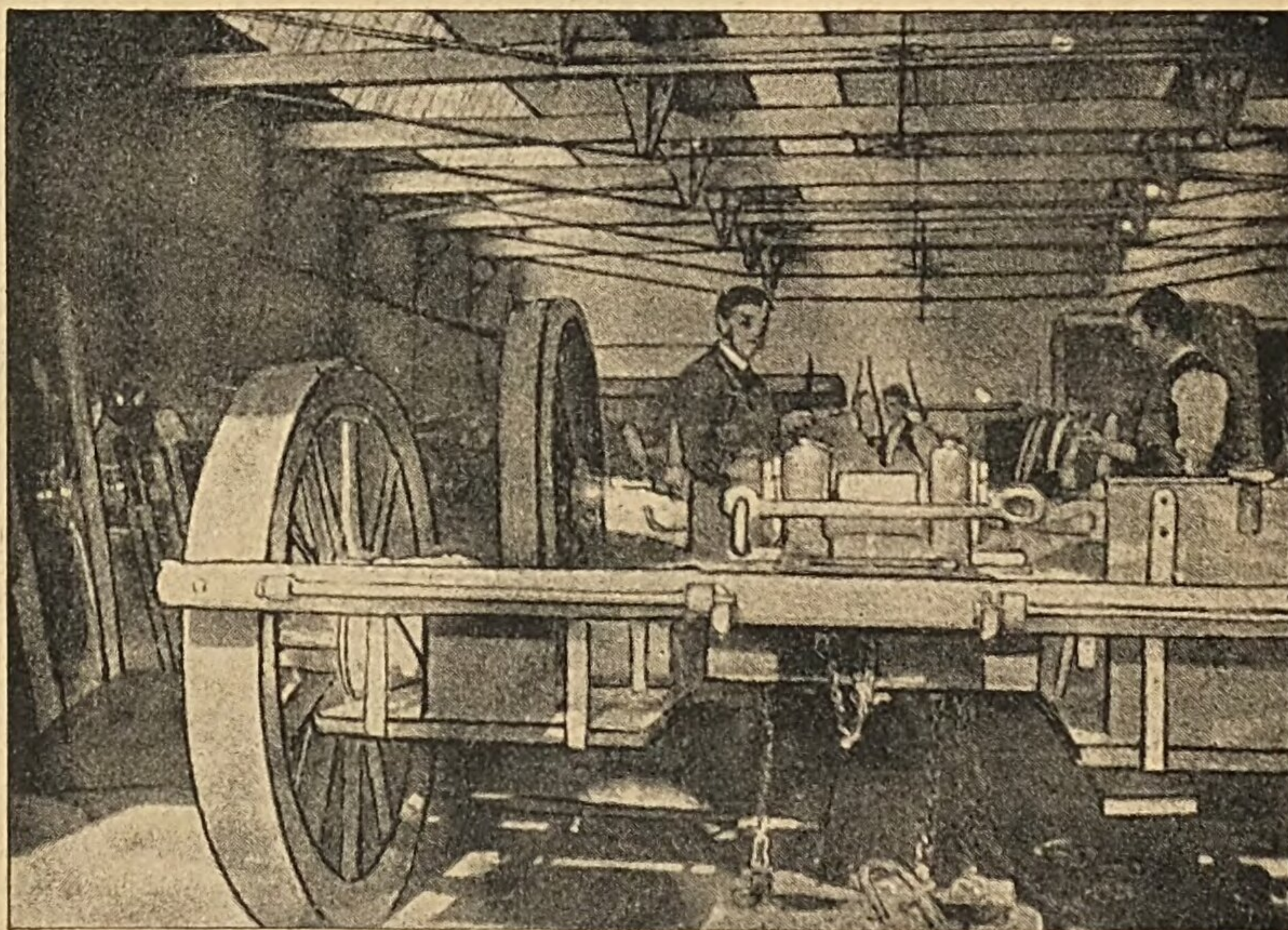
In the large sawmill there are some dreadfully ferocious instruments, which show all their teeth at once. These are circular saws driven by powerful machinery, and which whisk through a mighty tree, cutting it into beautifully straight and smooth planks with an ease and a proficiency that I might employ in dividing a slab of butter with a specially sharp knife. I saw many other saws, some straight, some curved, but all with



A BODY SHOP.

their work cut out before them. Then there is the planing machine, which is, in spite of its name, a beautiful piece of mechanism. This machine can plane boarding on all its four sides at one time, and finishes the whole business in less than a minute. It is truly marvellous. There are also machines for tongueing and grooving, for boring holes, rebating, mortising, chamfering, tenon making, and moulding, all of them worthy of the associations among which they move, and of the attention I paid them. The other sawmill is a replica in little of this one, and both are adequately protected against fire.

In this last room I saw how the wheel-making of the firm was done. The ingenious machinery at work requires more technical explanation than I am able to give it. The different pieces of wood are manipulated by the different machines, passed on to other operators who polish them on emery wheels, which never seem to stop revolving. The



A PAINT SHOP.

wheels are put together, receive their last touches on the lathes, and are then sent to the smithy to receive their tyres. Strange to say, I saw through the whole of these operations untired. It is all very perfect, very quick, and very effective. It all seems so easy now that I have seen how it is done.

Passing hence, I passed a smithy which is used for case-hardening the axles used by this department, and at the end of a nice small thing in walks, ascended to the upper regions of the worksheds of this carriage-making department, yeleft the wheelwrights' shop.

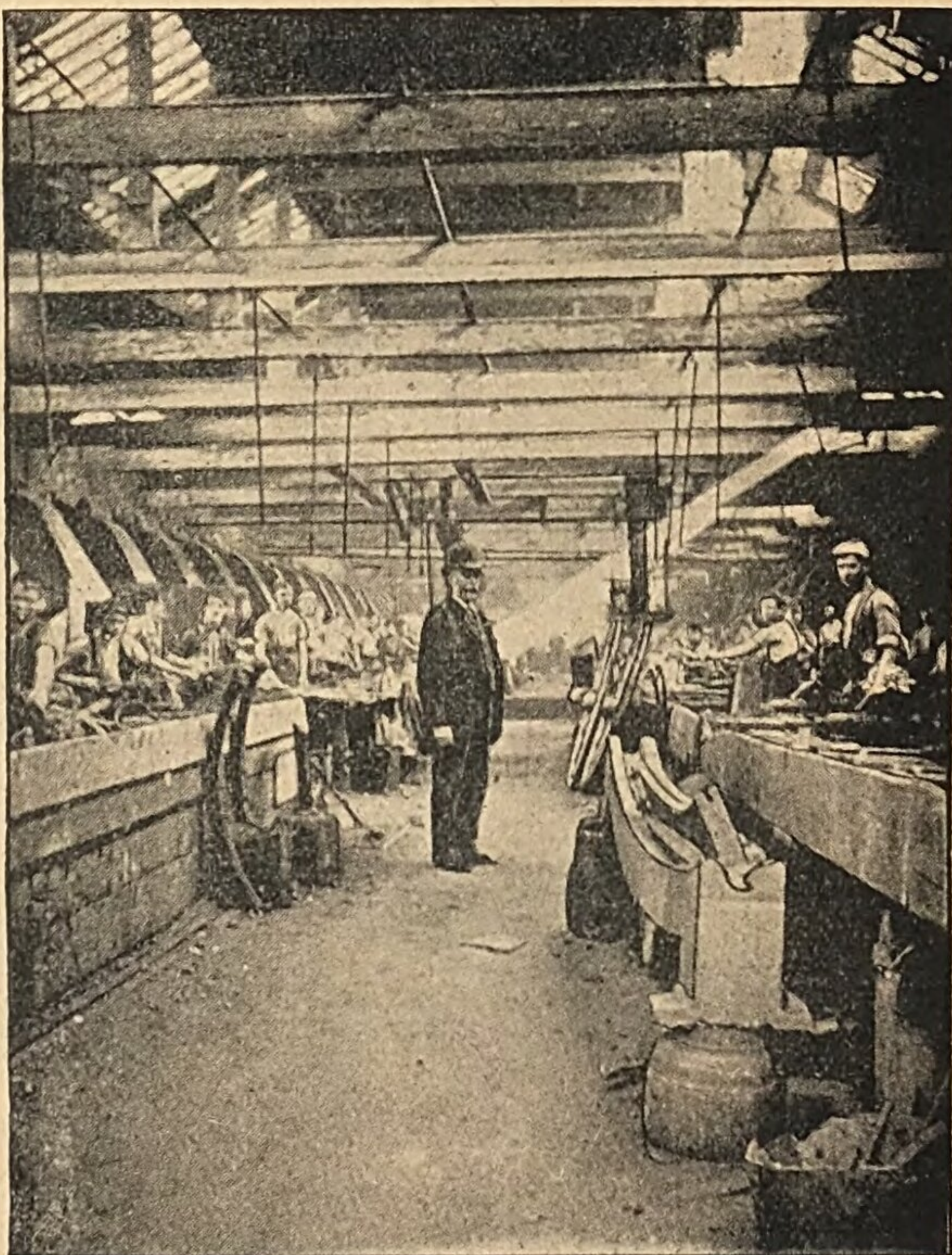
Here I found myself in a low-roofed shed, with a seemingly endless perspective. For I was in the largest wheelwright shop in the world. There were every description of carts and carriages in a more or less unfinished state, with busy men in all parts of the

place, hammering and nailing, and screwing and sawing—a picture of perfect industrial vigour. Below, a similar performance is enacted, but applied to the heavier of this class of work. Lifeboat carriages, omnibuses, furniture-vans, water-carts, and brewers' drays were among the wheeléd things I saw approaching a state of perfect completion in this workshop. And then, out into the open air again, traversing more of the pure unadulterated space which I shall always associate with these works, and into the paint shops.

These are nice cool and cleanly rooms, with cement flooring. Here were many beautiful specimens of the firm's finished handiwork receiving their painting and varnishing touches preparatory to being despatched to their several destinations. Around it all was a distinct nasal reminiscence of spring-cleaning and painting, which must have healthful properties, if the physical condition of the operatives is any criterion. But there is nothing wonderful in this when one considers that it is a matter of popular belief in Bristol that its healthy position among the death-rates of the big towns is not so much due to Clifton, as to the advantages of the health-giving-out properties of its river's mud. And then I passed into the wagon-erecting shops of the company, and there entered upon my first view of railway rolling-stock construction on a large scale.

Here, and in the adjacent carriage-erecting shops, were dozens of those wagons and carriages, so familiar to the travellers' eyes, in different stages of construction. Rough-looking baggage wagons for some Mexican railway stood side by side with queer third-class carriages for a Spanish line. Except that they have a passage through the centre, and that they appear to have been constructed with a view to carrying human beings and not pigs, these last have little to distinguish them from the railway stock of our metropolitan companies. But still, I must admit, that this little is a lot. Side by side with these was a train of carriages erected for a small Irish line, which like our Midland, has only two classes. That, though, is the only point of resemblance, for our friends across the water cannot afford to give their customers cushioned seats equally in both classes.

The company have made rolling-stock for most of the railways of the world. Though



A SMITHY.

their export trade in these little items is so considerable, it does not represent all their turn-out. The home trade is also a most important one. Though most of our big railway companies make their own rolling-stocks, they frequently have to call in the aid of outside firms: and then the Bristol Company comes in very useful, for both in quality and in price, their excellent position as *makers throughout* permit of their taking a premier place in all such contracts. Enormous Government orders are quite a speciality, and the immensity of the figures which such undertakings run into, are staggering.

When these carriages have to be exported, they are taken to pieces and separately packed in quite a number of strong cases, which are well tarred before being handed over to Jack Tar; in fact, the cases are rendered waterproof. These are all numbered, so when they reach their destination—it may be India, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, or South Australia,



A WAGON SHOP.

it matters not—they can be easily and expeditiously put together there. The mystery I had been labouring under on entering, as to the manner in which these huge trains were got over to these distinctly far and “furrin” parts, was now solved.

Then there is another painting-shop, necessarily on a very big scale, and I have done with the wood-work department of this most difficult-to-describe firm.

For important as are all the methods I have endeavoured to elucidate in the foregoing, they are almost secondary to the importance attached to the iron-work section of the works. All the many parts of a railway-carriage or wagon, which are not wood, are also manufactured in their entirety here. But, of course, the department is a distinctly distinct one. And it is not only for themselves that the great iron-works at Lawrence Hill are kept going. Wheels, axles, tyres, chainwork, coupling-rods, and the hundred-and-one other “connecting links” of a railway carriage are in constant demand by other makers

minus the advantages of production of the Lawrence Hill firm, in all parts of the world. A view of the two enormous smithies affords sufficient testimony to the immensity of the business done in this department. It was a complete transformation from the peaceful atmosphere and cleanly associations of the wood department I had left, to the noise and din and turmoil and dust and grime of these huge smiths' shops. In the first of the two I went through I counted no less than fifty fires, the air for which was supplied by three enormous fans. Quite a number of big steam-hammers were scattered about this huge room, which must be some hundreds of feet long, and is wide withal. Brawny-armed workmen lent, by their diligent labours, an animated air to the picture of general hammering around. The might of Vulcan is well exemplified in this department, the doings in which proved to me the most interesting portion of my visit. Here I saw made the axles, the coupling-rods, the wheel spokes, the draw-bars, axle guards, hooks, knees, springs, and the many other things indigenous to the finished railway carriage. One or two of these processes I shall describe, that my readers may the better judge of their interesting character.

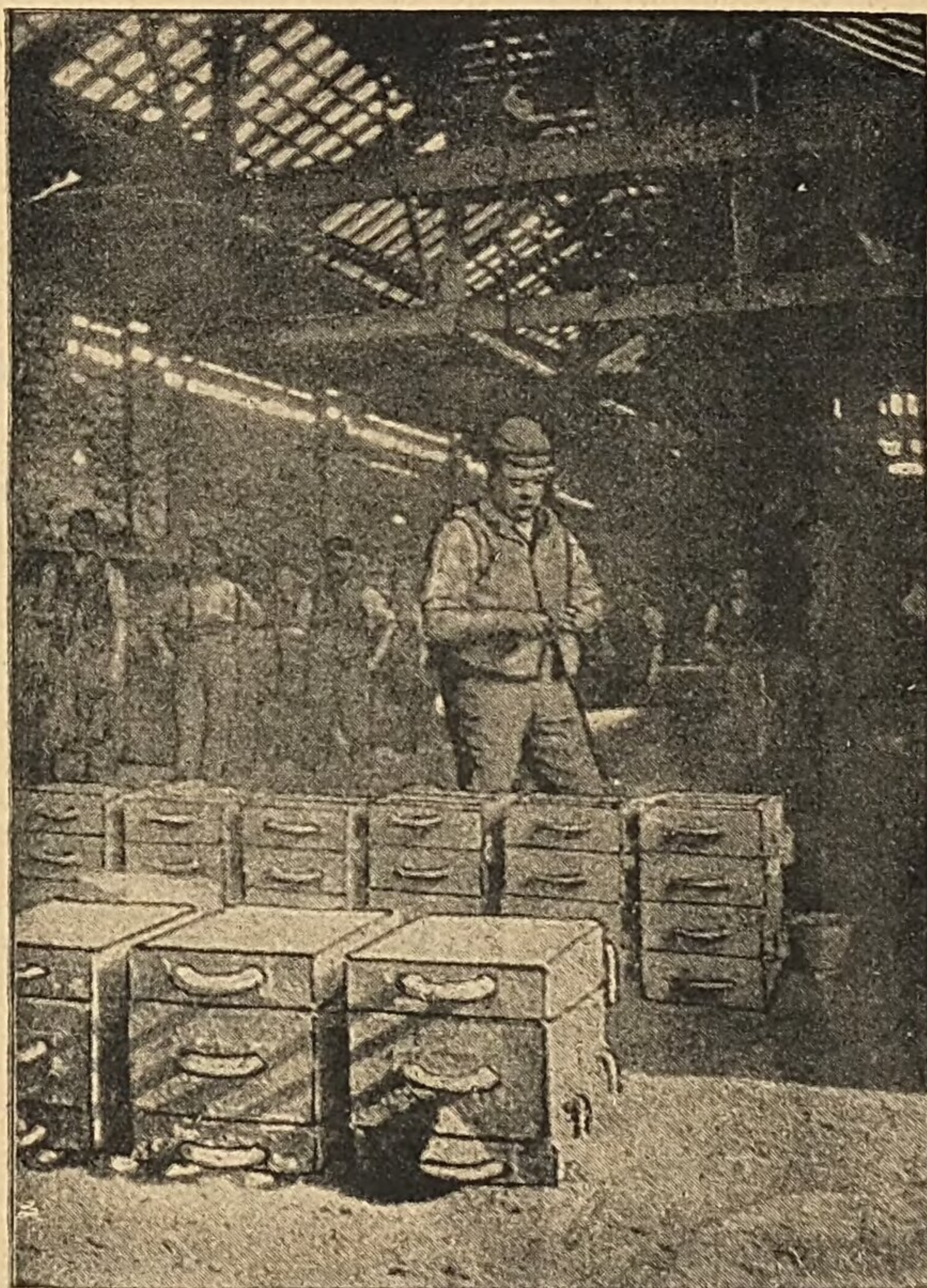
Axles are made from the very best scrap iron, which I saw being cut into pieces by large and powerful machine-shears. It is then thrown into a big screen, and all the dirt separated from it; then it is piled into little heaps, is put into the furnace, and the steam-hammer does the rest: though there is not much rest about this particular steam-hammer, or there wasn't on the day of my visit.

Wheelspokes.—Now this was quite an exciting operation, in which about three or four men took one part, and the steam-hammer the other. A bar of red-hot iron is drawn from the furnace, it is deftly turned and twisted the while the steam-hammer comes down with its monotonous but effective, thump, thump, thump, and it is shaped and wrought in a wonderfully short space of time into the form required. It is then taken to a really wonderful machine, which with an ease that no words can express, bends this great piece of iron into the triangular shape the spoke assumes in a finished state. There is no noise about this. Spoke-making belies its name. Not a word is uttered nor a sound heard—after the steam-hammer has had its little say—in the whole operation.

Then, to give just one more instance of interesting things accomplished during my visit, I will describe what I now consider to be the very simple process of wheel-tyring. Not all of us are used to wheels and their woes and their ways. Some of us may have given a passing thought of wonderment as to how the band of iron, which holds the whole in its firm embrace, and which must have measured considerably less in diameter than the wheel itself did when first made, got put there. I admit it has not troubled me greatly; it has not formed one of the many troubles which rendered my approach to middle-aged manhood's estate a trying journey. But then, we don't all look alike upon the same things, and by imparting my newly acquired knowledge anent this process, I may be incurring the everlasting gratitude of quite a large number of readers. Should they desire to express this feeling in anything like an appropriate form, my address can be had on application to my publishers.

This operation is really associated with another smiths' shop, larger even than the one I had just left, which contains about sixty fires, and drilling machines, emery wheels, and

steam-hammers without number. There is an outer space adjoining this big workshop, and I adjourned to this to see how a wheel was tyred. The wooden portion of the wheel—that is, all the wheel minus the tyre—is placed on a circular revolving platform, which has a lever at each side. Underneath this platform can be seen water, which plays its part in what is ultimately a battle of the elements. The tyre, which has been measured to fit the wheel, has been meanwhile heating itself within the interior of a big furnace, and is then brought out, carried by two men to the platform, put over the wheel, and hammered round it. As soon as the red-hot iron meets the wood it sets the wheel afire, and then the



A FOUNDRY.

fun commences. The two men catch hold of the levers, give a mighty turn, and down drops the whole platform and its blazing contents, with a hissing and a steaming quite out of proportion to the issues at stake. This puts out the fire, contracts the iron round the wood, cools the whole thing, and the wheel comes out ready for the finishing touches which preface its attachment to the cart or carriage it is made for.

I then paid a visit to the foundry. It contains two cranes, and I will best give an idea of the work it does towards the general output by stating, that it is responsible for an average of thirty to forty tons of castings a week. The operations pursued here are as unto most other foundries. Its great variety is, perhaps, its principal call for notice, for

every known kind of casting, except those for marine engineering,—and except those only—is cast here. The pattern shop adjoins it, and a fine well-lighted room it is. There is another foundry somewhere about the wilderness of this twelve acres, which I did not visit (I am only human), and which, I was told, was responsible for the lighter class of work—gun metal and brass castings, and special metal work.

I must perforce conclude my remarks upon this mammoth firm by expressing my sincere admiration for the order and discipline maintained throughout all the ramifications of this maze of a place. Discipline and good humour were the order of the day, and as applied to about 1,000 workpeople, it speaks volumes for the *esprit de corps* of the staff. And thus ended a pleasant, though too-pedestrian a trip.

ON ROPES.

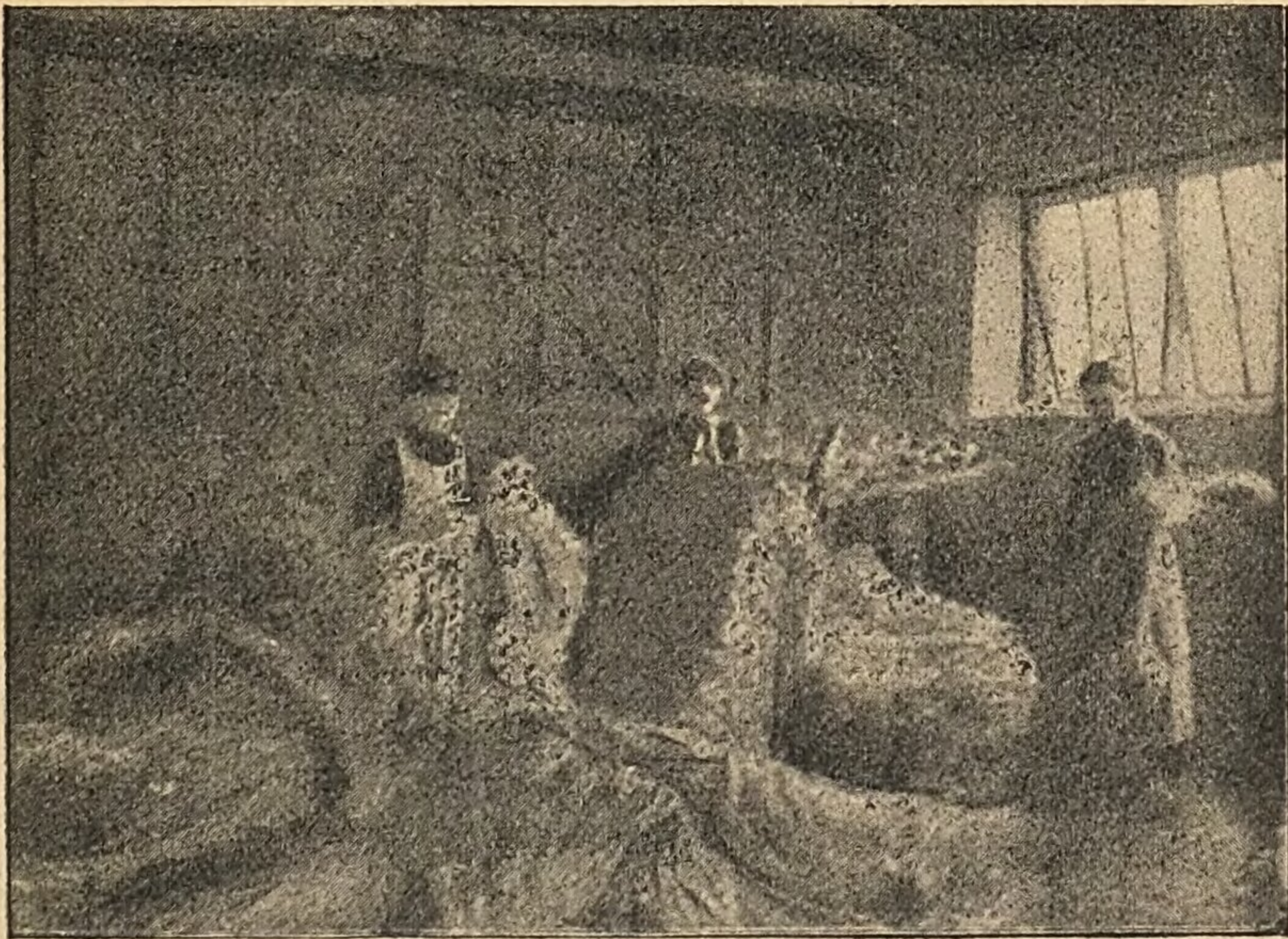
OMINOUSLY enough, I conclude my industrial account of Bristol — at the end of a rope. Many kind friends have prophesied some such *finale* for me at some time or other; and here it is at last, and myself the least-to-be-commiserated-with of people. A rope's ending has many a time and oft proved the most valuable of lessons. I am therefore hoping that the experience I have gained in the manufacture of ropes, and which I am about to retail for the benefit of all those others whom it may concern, will prove of substantial interest. It is a subject with which I am in thorough accord, and around which I have entwined myself, physically and metaphorically.

Ere I thread my way through the dim passages and long corridors of a big representative west-country rope works: before I begin my long rope walk, it will be fitting that I should divest myself of any stored-up conclusions upon the subject of ropes, their uses and their abuses, of which I may be possessed. We have all of us an interest in ropes, though the interest is more of a sentimental than a practical nature. It is fated that but a comparative few should find in a rope the be-all and end-all of existence. There has been a heavy drop in the hangman's business of late years. It is not because we as a nation are becoming soberer: we are not having a drop too much on that account. The cause lies elsewhere. But its whereabouts is no concern of mine—nor my readers, who, by the way, are doubtless expecting to learn something about rope making.

The firm of Wm. Terrell & Sons, Limited, is one of the oldest business concerns in this commercially patriarchal city. For over 120 years it has been distributing its civilising productions over the face of the earth. The untangling of the skein of Terrell's genealogical business associations with Bristol, is a proceeding which is not so knotty as it is nice, or as one would think it to be. On the contrary, it is all plain sailing: one has but to go through the works and interview the old gentlemen who tell you of their own fifty years of service, and that of their fathers' and grandfathers' before them, to be satisfied as to the unimpeachable antiquity of the firm's birth certificate. Age is not everything—though it counts for much in port wine, and ladies over twenty-five. Magnitude is another, and Terrell's, Limited, are the largest rope and twine manufacturers in the West of England, and the largest patent-packing manufacturers in Great Britain. So the firm has literally two strings to its bow, which, with my introduction, it is now making to that greater British public for which I write.

The variety of cords which go to make up the term "ropes," is legion. To know the ropes is not much easier than to know oneself. All cordage boasting a circumference of an

inch or more is dubbed rope. Twisted cordages of more modest dimensions are known as twines or lines—not of necessity hard lines. When the dimensions are still smaller the article becomes double thread or double yarn. All these varieties of cords are made up of at least two, and in most cases of a great many separate yarns, which are textile fibres drawn out and twisted on regular lines. For the manufacture of threads and fine twines everything required is that a sufficient number of fibres and yarns should be twisted together. In rope-making, the comparative heaviness and coarseness of the materials employed render necessary the co-operation of specially strong machinery. Some of the most ingenious mechanism ever invented and constructed is devoted to the requirements of this industry. Its wonderful dexterity is only equalled by its extraordinary simplicity: a truism, by the way, applicable to most great inventions.



AMONGST THE RAW MATERIAL.

Modern rope-making is divided into two branches: what might be termed the vegetarian school and the metallic school. One class of ropes are made from vegetable fibres—on the hotch-potch system—the other, from wire.

You can take your choice of vegetable fibres for rope-making. But it is a *sine quâ non* that none must be green. Only well-seasoned fibres need apply. The choice of assortment is, however, usually limited by the up-to-date rope manufacturer. Generally speaking, nothing beats the common or nursery-garden order of hemp, on the score of strength, suppleness, flexibility, and durability. Consequently, common hemp is in uncommon demand in all places where rope-makers most do congregate.

Manilla hemp has of all hems the most tenacity of purpose. In the manufacture of heavy ropes, it is unequalled. But it is not particularly well endowed for small cordage,

as its nature, like the average aldermanic head, is too woody. So other sorts of hems play their innings in cord-making, such as sisal hemp, which is of South American extraction; phormium hemp, which is imported from New Zealand, and Russian hems. All these are strong fibres, and are largely used by rope-makers. Then there is jute. Now the best that can be said about jute, is that it is cheap; the worst, that it is not as good as the hems named. But, as will be readily surmised, jute is an important factor in the manufacture of certain classes of rope.

Now having given myself rope-material enough, I will hang on to all this preface the system by which a rope is built out of this over-done account of its raw material.

A rope is composed of a certain number of strands, which does not include the one most Bristolians make for when "in town." Now a strand, that is, a rope-strand, is made



A HECKLER.

up of a number of yarns; it doesn't particularly matter how many, for a strand cannot hear. But there are certain categoric laws employed, which testify to the different complexity of the various strands. Now if I was undergoing an examination in rope-making, and was, moreover, the fortunate possessor of a list of correct answers to the questions propounded, this is something like what would take place:—

Examiner. "When three strands are twisted together, what do they form?"

Lesser Columbus. (Making sure): "A hawser-laid rope."

Ex. "And three such hawsers?"

L.C. (With great confidence): "A cable."

Ex. (Who is awe-struck at such knowledge in one so young): "And what goes to make a shroud-laid rope?"

L.C. (In his most funereal manner): "A shroud-laid rope consists of four strands laid around a central strand."

Ex. "Quite right, quite right, you are a credit to your age and country." (Gives Lesser Columbus a penny and some good advice—and leaves.)

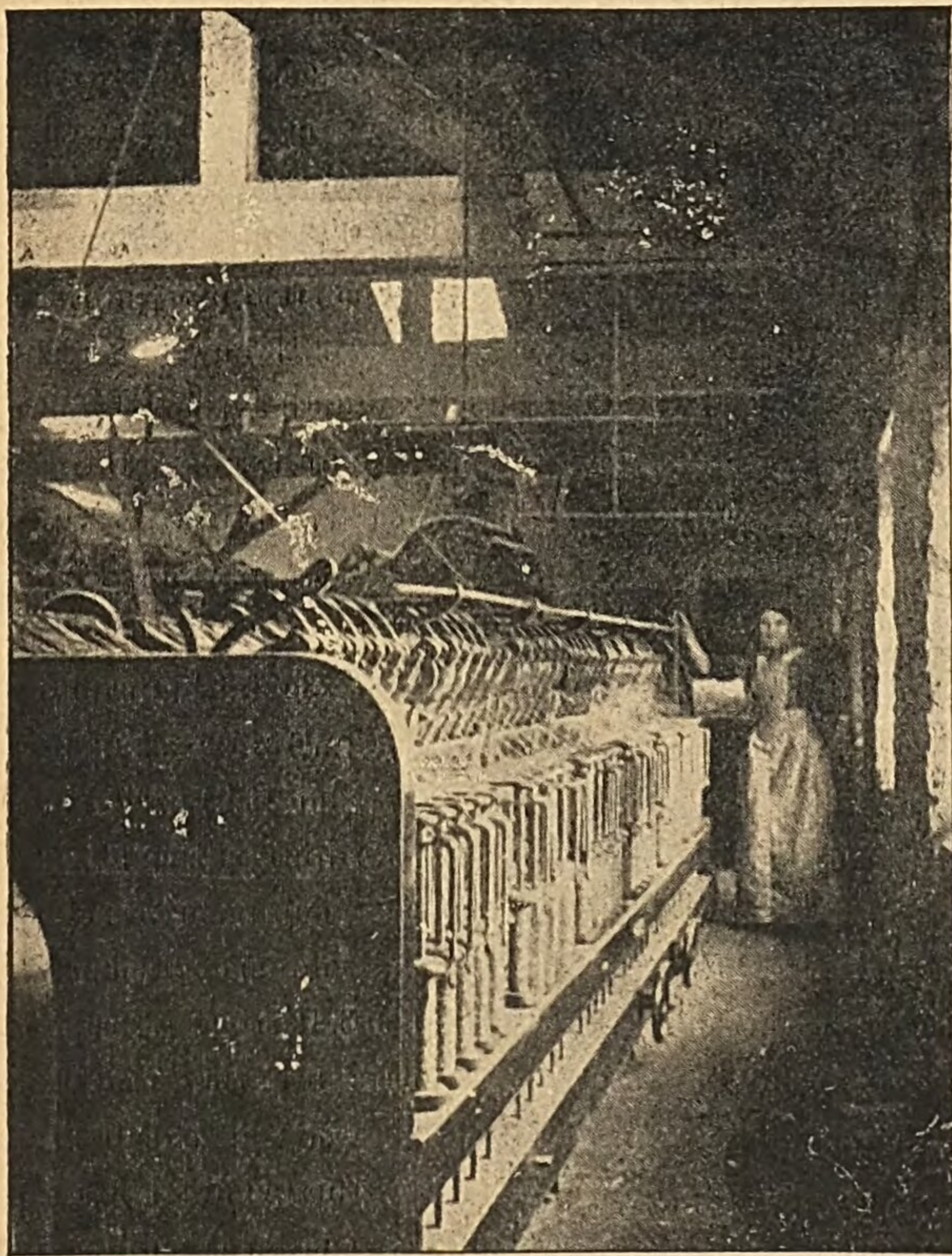
I must give a twist to this article, and the fibre, ere a rope is possible. The primary object of twisting fibres together to form a rope is that by mutual friction they may be held together when a strain is applied to the whole. Hard twisting has the further advantage of rendering the fibres more compact, and preventing the penetration of moisture when the rope is exposed to water.

Twisting is not always the same thing, or done the same way: in fact, it is everything by turns and nothing long. The proper degree of twist is a matter of the most important nature. A badly twisted rope would be in great straits when put to the test. For twisting of itself injuriously affects the strength of the fibres, and it is possible to twist a cord so hard that it will break under the action. So the would-be-maker-of-ropes must fain put this twist into his pipe and smoke it.

The first process associated with rope-making is the preparation of the raw material for treatment. In a very large room in these works, the getting to which necessitated considerable climbing and much loose walking—not, you must understand, the same thing as tight-rope walking—I found several girls at work among heaps and bales of Manilla hemp, which savoured more of roughish golden tresses than anything else I could think of at the time. This fibre they separated by hand, tearing it length ways, and splitting it into workable proportions across a species of table-knife, *not* the sort of thing you or I are accustomed to use when under the mahogany. This material is taken along a very long gallery on a species of small-tramcar, which though no prettier than those in use in Bristol streets, seemed to excel them in speed. This brings the hemp to a big room filled with machinery and girls, and the first mechanical process, that known as "heckling," takes place. This is quite a different operation to the one known by that name during Scotch elections, though the one resembles the other in the cutting-up-rough nature of the treatment. But with ropes, "heckling" resembles the ordinary combing of every day-and-night life. The Heckler breaks up the fibre and combs it out into a long narrow strip called a sliver, in which form it arrives at the other side of the machine. Each of these Hecklers measure 29 feet by 7 feet. The manner in which the hemp is spread on to the machine is important. If the material has not been divided into even portions and it is not laid on the Heckler with great regularity, an uneven sliver is the result. In the process, each fibre is separated and laid side by side, and one yard of hemp produces sixteen yards of sliver at the delivery end. After this, the Manilla is passed through a second machine of similar construction, in its sliver shape. Funny word, sliver! I can hardly part with it now that I have got to leave it. Then what should be called the first drawing lesson takes place.

This consists of placing these slivers, eight or ten of them together, over a drawing machine—not a half-penny comic-paper artist by the way—which combs it out still more. Other machines afford a second and a third drawing, with the result that the sliver of Manilla is reduced to the required size and fineness suitable for spinning.

Until this visit to Terrell's I had been under the impression that the most systematic yarn-spinning was done in its completest form by my brother authors. But I was wrong. Personally, I do not think I shall ever again be able to deviate very much from the strictest veracity while the remembrance of these mighty yarn-spinning machines lasts. In this spinning-room there are a number of enormous automatic machines. These are set to work upon the slivers, which are spun out into a thread or yarn, of all sizes. As this is produced, so is it spun on to the bobbins, with unceasing regularity. These bobbins of yarn are then taken and placed in frames called bobbin-frames. The ends of these yarns are then drawn through a central hole in the machine,



SPINNING MACHINE.

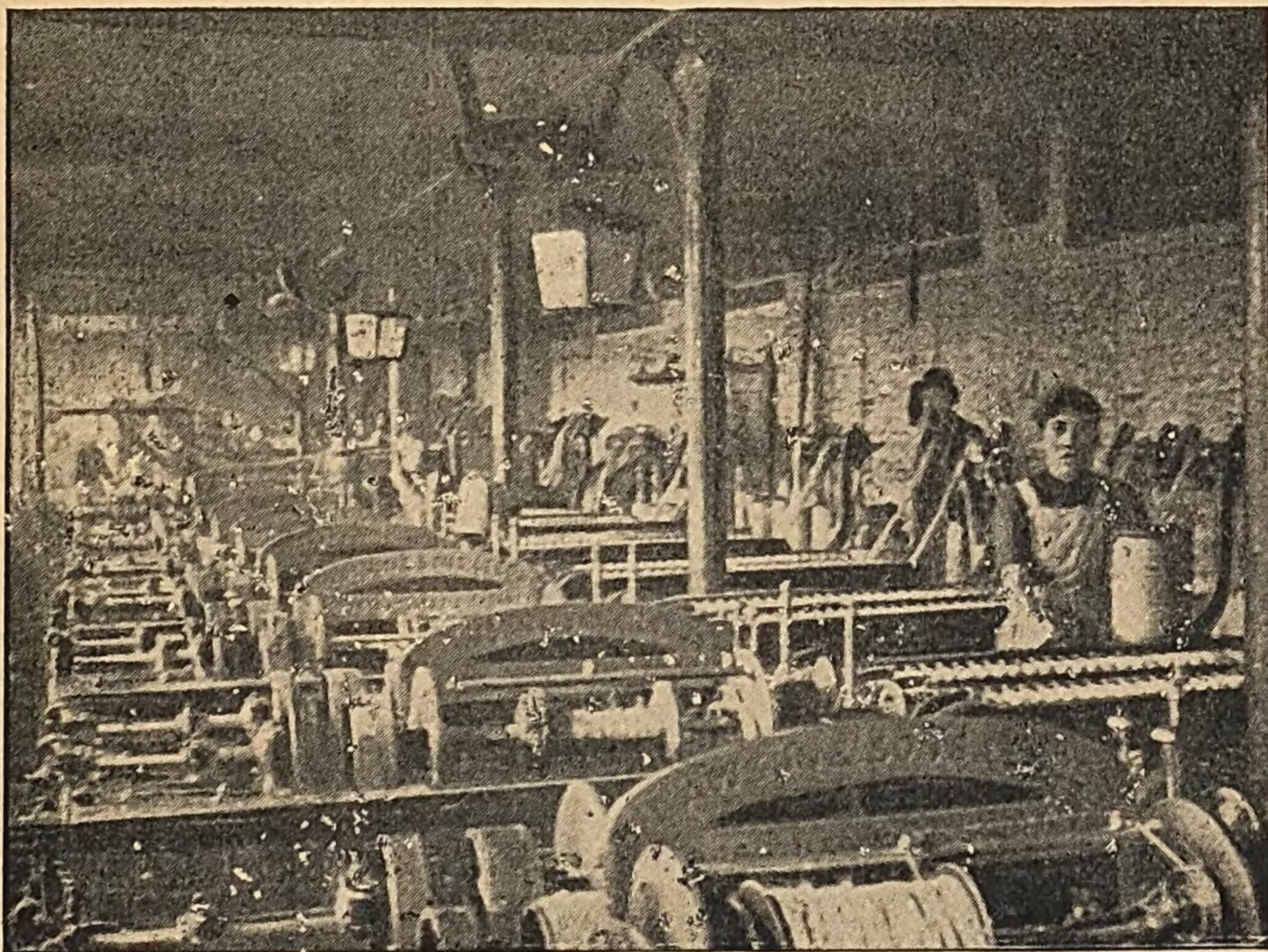
meeting there, and receiving in their collective rapid transit through this mechanism, the necessary twisting to form the rope-strand, which you notice being drawn through and wound round a huge bobbin at the other end, with a rapidity truly astounding. From 12 to 250 of these bobbins can be employed at the same time on one of these machines, according to the size of rope required from their united support.

The foregoing is but one process of rope-making, as carried on in Bristol. There are others. I was taken into what is called the rope-making ground — a covered apartment built on the race-course plan. I started walking down this place, being curious to see what it was like at the other end for one thing, and desirous of breaking the last pedestrian record for another. The

hours rolled wearily on, and when eventually I was picked up exhausted and taken back to the place from whence I came (an appropriate sentence this last one), old age had left its finger-marks upon me, and my golden curls were tinged with a grey sprinkling that spoke volumes for the length of this rope-ground. By this process the yarn is passed through a circular perforated plate called the register, and then through tubes of various sizes according to the dimensions of the rope required, and is then taken for a ride (lucky yarn) down the walk by means of a machine, which travels along tram lines, and is paid out—not in its own coin—but at great length. These strands are then

fastened to hooks at the far-end. Three or four strands are then put through a tube, fitting into grooves at equal distances, and then laid together. This forms the rope. Rope can be made on this system—what I should term the long-service system—from $\frac{3}{4}$ in. in circumference. The rope is then put on a steam reel, and coiled ready for use.

Some of the finest ropes I ever saw were being made of very curious design—that's flat. Flat ropes are extensively used for mining purposes, their "winding" qualities proving the mainspring of their excellence. They are made by sewing together four, six, or eight separate ropes, each alternate rope being of the opposite twist, so that they join and lay perfectly flat when sewn. These are made on a powerful steam sewing machine, and must reap a goodly harvest of profitable trading. A rope of this flattering type was recently



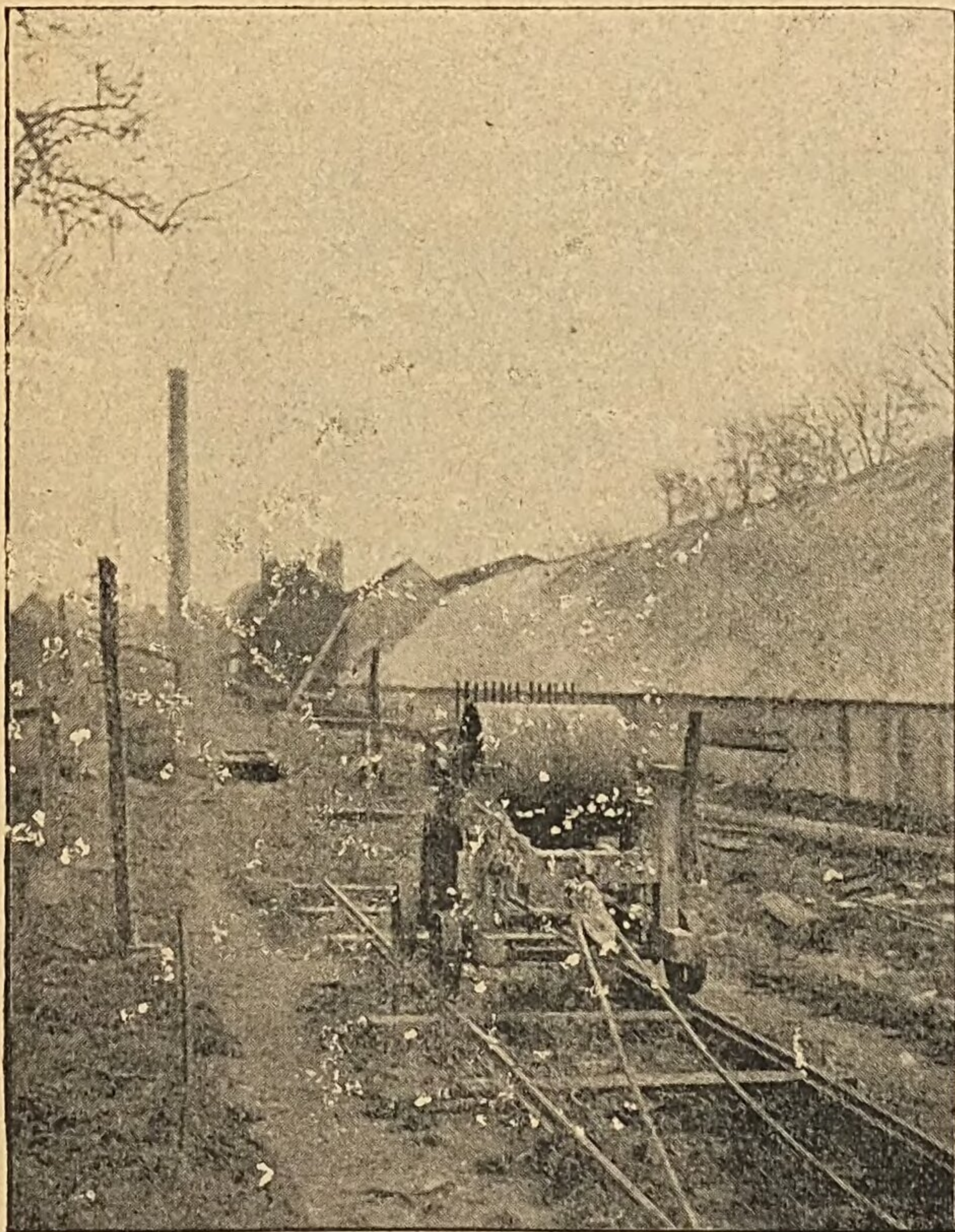
TWINE MACHINES.

made by Terrell's, which weighed over $6\frac{1}{4}$ tons in the balance, and was not found wanting in any good haulage qualities. It was exported: for one can't find room for such things in so small a country as England.

A great business is being done by the firm with the Newfoundland fisheries every year. Many thousands of coils of rope are shipped there direct. But it is not only in this fishy sort of business that the firm shine. In all parts of the world they endeavour to find markets for their ropes and twines. Any enterprising merchant in Timbuctoo, Kamskatcha, or other distant settlement, reading these lines, may use my name as an introduction to Terrell's for the purpose of obtaining an agency to sell theirs.

I will now haul in my ropes, and uncoil my experience of twine-making, which is,

and yet is not, quite the same thing as rope-making. It is not only a difference of degree, but one of kind. There are some ingenious machines in which the yarn is placed, and out of which it unwinds thoroughly compact twine. These are called gill-spinning machines. To polish it, it is taken to another machine which sizes and cleans the twine from all impurities, and adds a beautiful gloss. By this machine, the twine is washed, polished, and dried at one process. There is another system of cord-making, which is usually reserved for the thicker qualities. It is dubbed drum-polishing, and its points of difference consist of its being sized, dried, and finished out-of-doors, which necessitates plenty of open space. The ends of the twine are fastened to and stretched across a moveable drum,



A DRUM.

and are run a great way down this uncovered rope-walk and fastened at the other end. Very much depends upon the weather with this process, and in England that is saying a good deal. They are very proud of this drum-finished twine of theirs, at Terrell's, and it has its own little band of expert performers.

Now, whichever the process, the twine after it is dried is a finished product. It has only now to be balled and sold, the latter process very often requiring much bawling to effect. There are several balling machines at these works, and they do their work cleanly and swiftly. I have often wondered how the average ball of string was put together. I now wonder no longer.

One would think that the production of all kinds of ropes, of all shapes and sizes and qualities—not to speak of the twines and cords—would have been enough for any one firm. It is, in fact, more than sufficient for many. But not so here. As I mentioned in the beginning, Terrell's are the largest makers of what is termed patent packing, in the kingdom. Perhaps the finest packing for high pressure triple engines made, is that known in the trade as the Turner and Crawford Patent. The manufacture of this is vested solely in this firm. It has all the advantages of asbestos fibre, but without any of its disadvantages. The process of packing manufactures is to some extent a secret one. But as much of it

as I may reveal, and perhaps more than is good for the public to know—that much will I disclose.

The raw material is boiled, and chemically manipulated to soften the staple and remove all impurities. It is kept in tremendous boilers for twelve hours, and is then sent into a large stove-room to dry. This apartment is a species of Turkish-bath hot-room, with the hot-air coming up through a perfect sieve of holes in the floor. Another twelve hours is expended on the drying. Then it is passed through a crushing machine which opens out and softens the fibre.

It is next weighed and passed on to a carding machine, where it is within an ace of being combed to shreds. It emerges crushed and broken up in spirit and in substance, in the form of a sliver. It is allowed to fall into high, round tins, which are called “sliver cans” by those who cannot think of a better designation for them. It is then passed through a drawing frame, which equalises the fibre and opens it out still more. Then the sliver is put on a roving machine, which belies its name by remaining perfectly stationary, and is twisted into form. Then it is wound upon bobbins, stranded, and here I will leave it, for the subsequent proceedings interested me no more, being but a repetition of the rope-making processes. For packing, which is used in the cylinders of all engines, is turned out in round and square forms, varying like ordinary rope in thickness and formation of twists. There is an almost endless variety of packings.

A long busy room I visited was called the braiding-room, where a large number of the packings are made. Every kind from three-eighths of an inch to $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch in diameter was represented here. I was then permitted to gaze my fill at the firm’s store-room of these packings, and would have packed off myself, if I had not been told that there was still one more thing worthy of my inspection ere I ploughed my way back.

I used the word “ploughed” advisedly, or with malice aforethought, as they say in the police-court reports. The approach to Messrs. Terrell’s works, which are some quarter



OLD SERVANTS.

of a mile from their offices and warehouses in the Welsh Back—an unsalubrious roadway near a similar water-way hard by Bristol Bridge—is, or was, in a most upsetting condition. In fact, there is, or was, no roadway—there is, or was, one in course of making. *When* it rains in Bristol, the place where the roadway ought to grow is, or was, a veritable muddy sea, approximating in colour but excelling in substance the neighbouring stream. On one of the occasions of my visit I was hurrying along this then some-day-to-be-completed-road, with an appointment in view and the knowledge that I was late for a pleasant memory, when, in company with some scores of other would-be-progressists, my course



AN AVERAGE OF 32 YEARS' SERVICE.

was stayed and I was told to "bide a wee." "I bided a wee," or, at all events, my time, and then inquired of a workman the cause for the compulsory detention. "They are blasting," he replied, somewhat enigmatically, and unnecessarily, considering that I could hear all that my impatiently grumbling neighbours were saying.

But to return to my ropes. It transpired that this ubiquitous firm were not bound down with hempen restrictions. They also make wire ropes, of a kind: the kind used for ships' rigging. I took a good look round this big workshop, satisfied myself that wire ropes were being made, and that the numerous coils of those I saw were wire ropes, allowed myself to be initiated not only into the mysteries of their construction but into the methods of their usage, and then walked

my way out, feeling that if my brain impressions of what I had seen were not lasting in character, the grease stains and tar embellishments on the garments I wore, were. You can't always have things just how you like or where you like, or I should have preferred to have allowed my mental faculties to have had the monopoly of this visit's impressions.

The workpeople are many of them old servants in the extremest sense of the term. One, Thomas Webb by name, assured me during the morning that he had worked fifty years for Messrs. Terrell. In the afternoon he waylaid me and did his best to lower my own opinion of my mathematical capacity, by asking me to say how many years his family

had been employed with the firm, seeing that his father worked there as an apprentice, and his grandfather at some even anterior period had there done his spell of spinning. In the evening I was asked to listen to an explanation from him, which went to show that any doubts I might have rashly entertained of the correctness of his statements to me could be verified by a certificate of his own birth, that of his father and grandfather, and the burial announcements of at least the last two. Other statutory documentary evidence was being gradually brought to bear upon my swiftly scattering senses, when I was rescued by the advent of a stranger who innocently asked Thomas Webb a question upon some other subject, and was at once made the recipient of the stored-up particulars that were to have been mine. But I do not begrudge the stranger this. On the contrary: he may be living still, and some day I may meet him, and press his hand, and thank him.



THE HANDS.

One of the earliest references to hemp-ropes is made in Judges, where it chronicles futile efforts of the Philistines to bind Samson with them. But truth to tell there is not much historical association with the subject. The rope has never played so great a part in history as some other things—the axe for instance. Hemp, it is perhaps but little known, can and is put to even a deadlier purpose than rope-making. From it, a powerful drug or poison is made by Eastern peoples, which is called *haschish*. It is taken into the system like other, though slower poisons—through a pipe, but its effects, if I remember rightly, are more deadly. From this drug we derive our English word for a most un-English occupation—the assassin. It might be something in the way of a reform of capital punishment if we made the criminal swallow the rope instead of adorning its tail. At all events I present the idea, a small thing perhaps, but mine own, to the parties most concerned.

The firm of Wm. Terrell & Sons, Limited, is a private limited liability company. The managing director is Mr. Wm. Crawford, a thoroughly practical gentleman, who was once upon a time articled to the trade for seven years, and has seen altogether about thirty years of rope-making. The secretary to the company is Mr. G. H. Terrell. Perhaps the best compliment I can pay the firm is to state that few, if any, business concerns in the country could show such a term of long-service on the part of their employés.

CONCLUSIONS.

CONCLUSIONS.

HAVING delivered myself of my report, proved that Bristol had a previous existence, proclaimed its loss, announced its discovery, and described to the best of my ability the results of this finding, I am concerned as to how I can best satisfy the request for conclusions from my researches. I am in the position of being asked to prophesy without knowing, than which no more unreliable method of forecasting possibilities exists. But there must be an end to everything, even to conclusions. And this is what I think to commence with.

There is a new spirit arising in Bristol which knows not pusillanimity. It has yet to attain the maturity and the vigorous activity of northern and midland enterprise—but it is growing that way. And this circumstance supplies me with good cause for hope in the immense further growth and greatness of this remarkable old city.

When “Greater Bristol” is incorporated into the long list of desirable facts, everything is possible. The enterprising movement now at work, which makes for the greater freedom of the Docks and their grand extension, is certain of accomplishment and success. Bristol must obtain its share—perhaps one day, the lion’s share—of the great Atlantic traffic. The bewailing of its loss shall no longer be the sole occupation of the maritime Bristolian. The mouth of his river presents magnificent natural advantages, requiring only that artificial preparation necessary for their employment. When Bristol is possessed of its new Ocean Docks, and is provided with coal-tips, and harbours, and harbour-railways, it can then bid for an illimitable trade with the great Continent it was the first to discover.

In the immense variety of its manufactures lies the city’s greatest strength. And no place in England offers a better opening for fresh industries. An alternative route to London is a necessity—and will come, like the obnoxious tip, to those who wait.

The lethargy of Bristolians is not for all time. A more liberal tone will soon assert itself, in its Council, in its magisterial appointments—and I do not even despair of a reform of its Aldermanry. Bristol has within it—latent perhaps—all that makes for the extreme limits of commercial and social greatness. What is at present the swamp of *laissez-faire*, may yet become the tidal-wave of an ever-advancing, ever-reforming passion for supremacy among the cities of the earth.

I have not only spoken of the things Bristol lacks, but of those in which it excels. What I began as a good joke, I have not finished in bad humour—that has been spread over this work indifferently. And I do not despair of being taken seriously—by a people with

whom I have been very much taken in other ways—the Bristolians. I have desired to be none the less their friend, because I have been compelled to be their critic.

Hannah More—who knew Bristol almost as well as myself, though she lived under the disadvantage of being born and buried in it—when a young girl, resided at Stapleton, on the road to Bristol. These lines are hers:—

“ This road leads to a great city,
In which the people are more rich than witty.”

I will leave to some younger and rasher historian the opinion of their appropriateness, or want of it—now.

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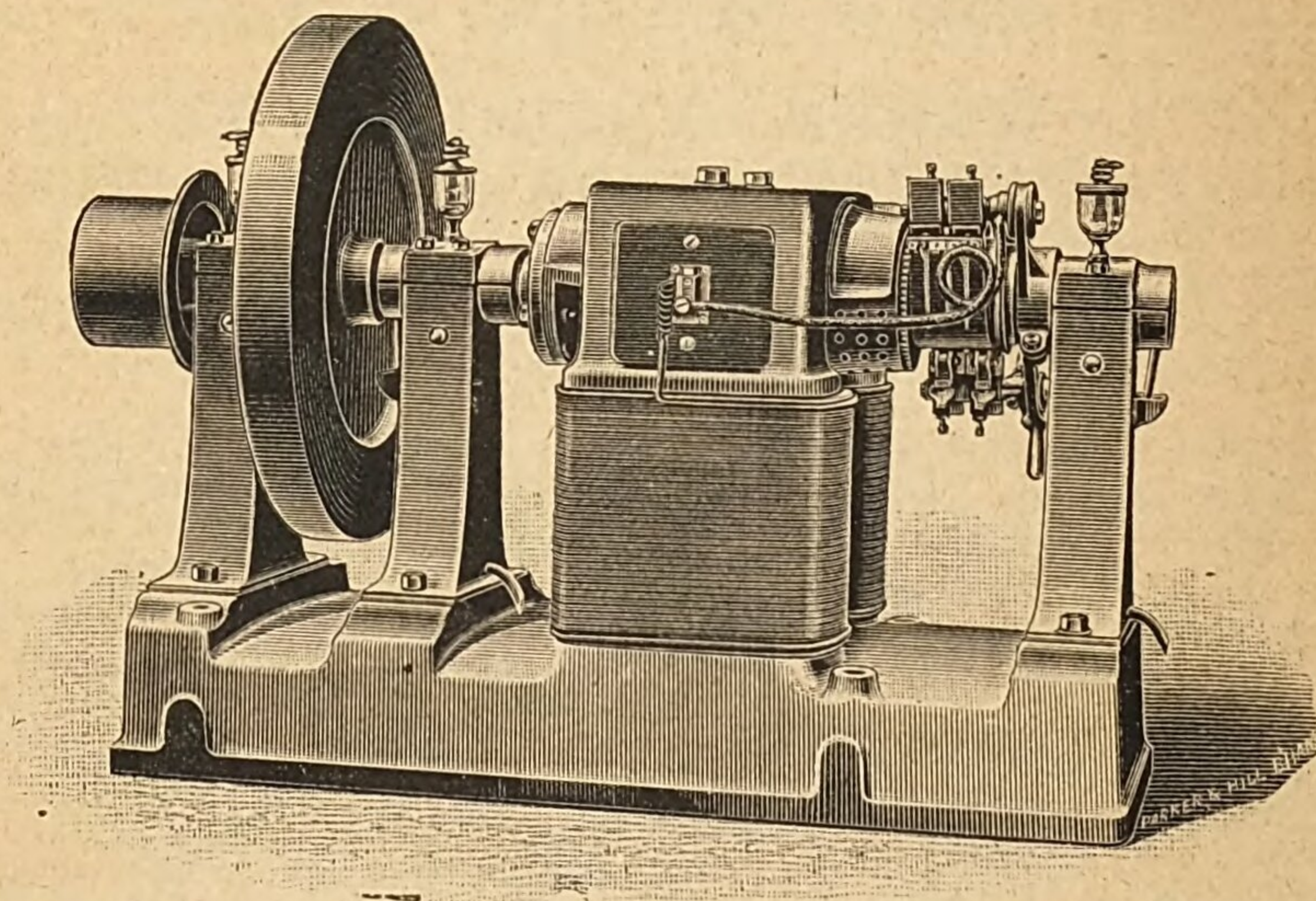
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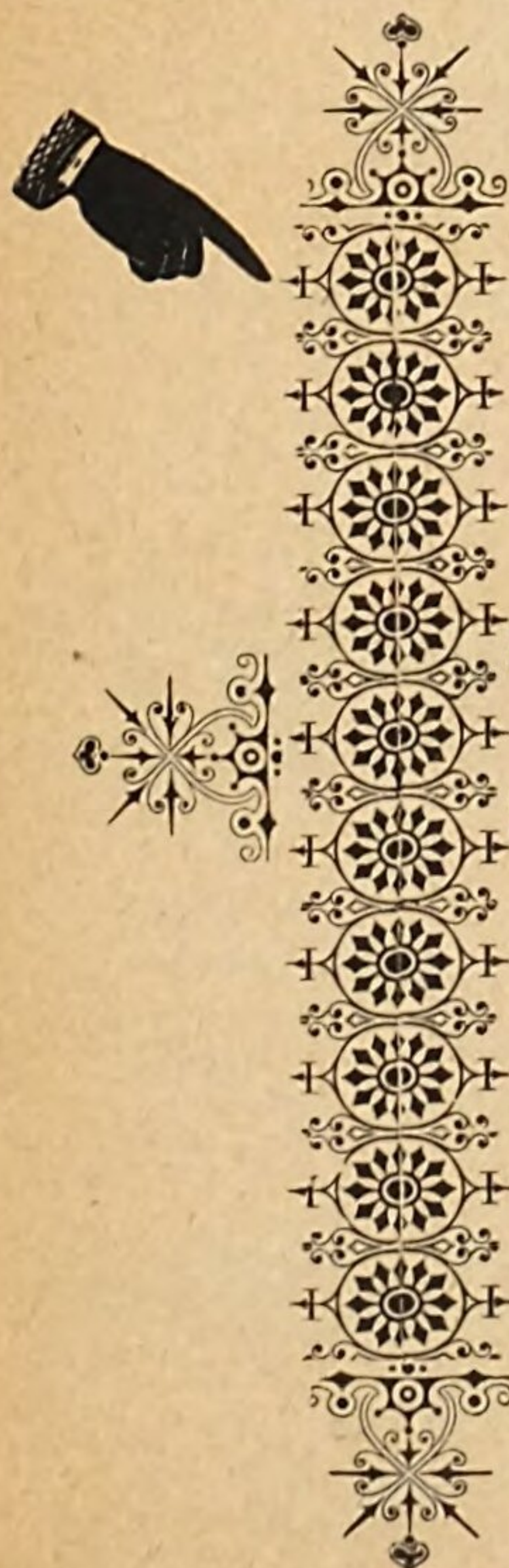
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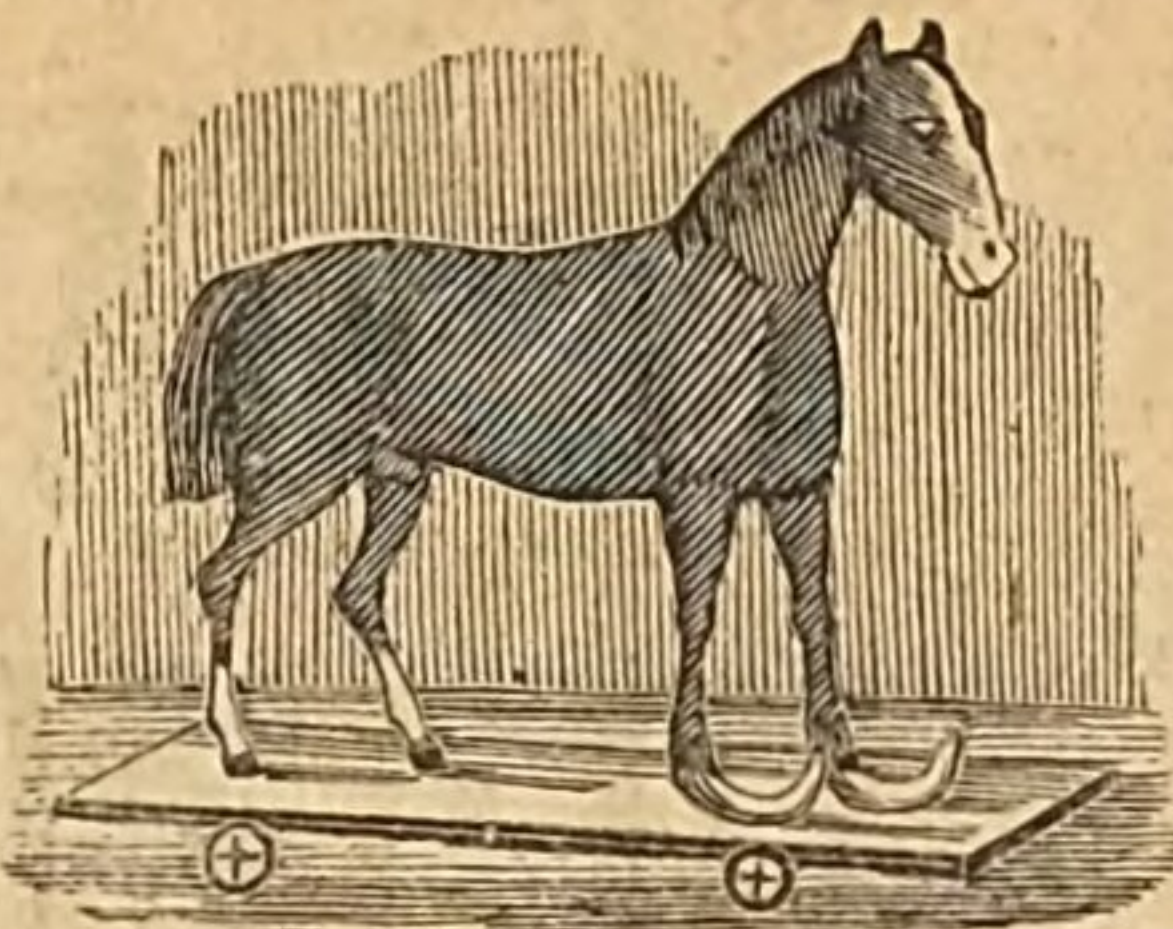
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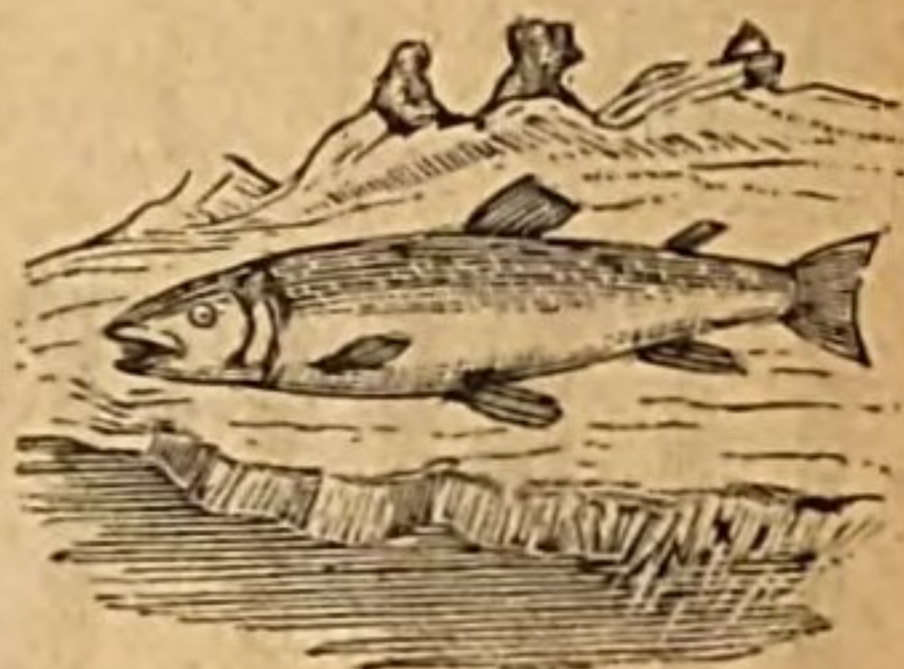
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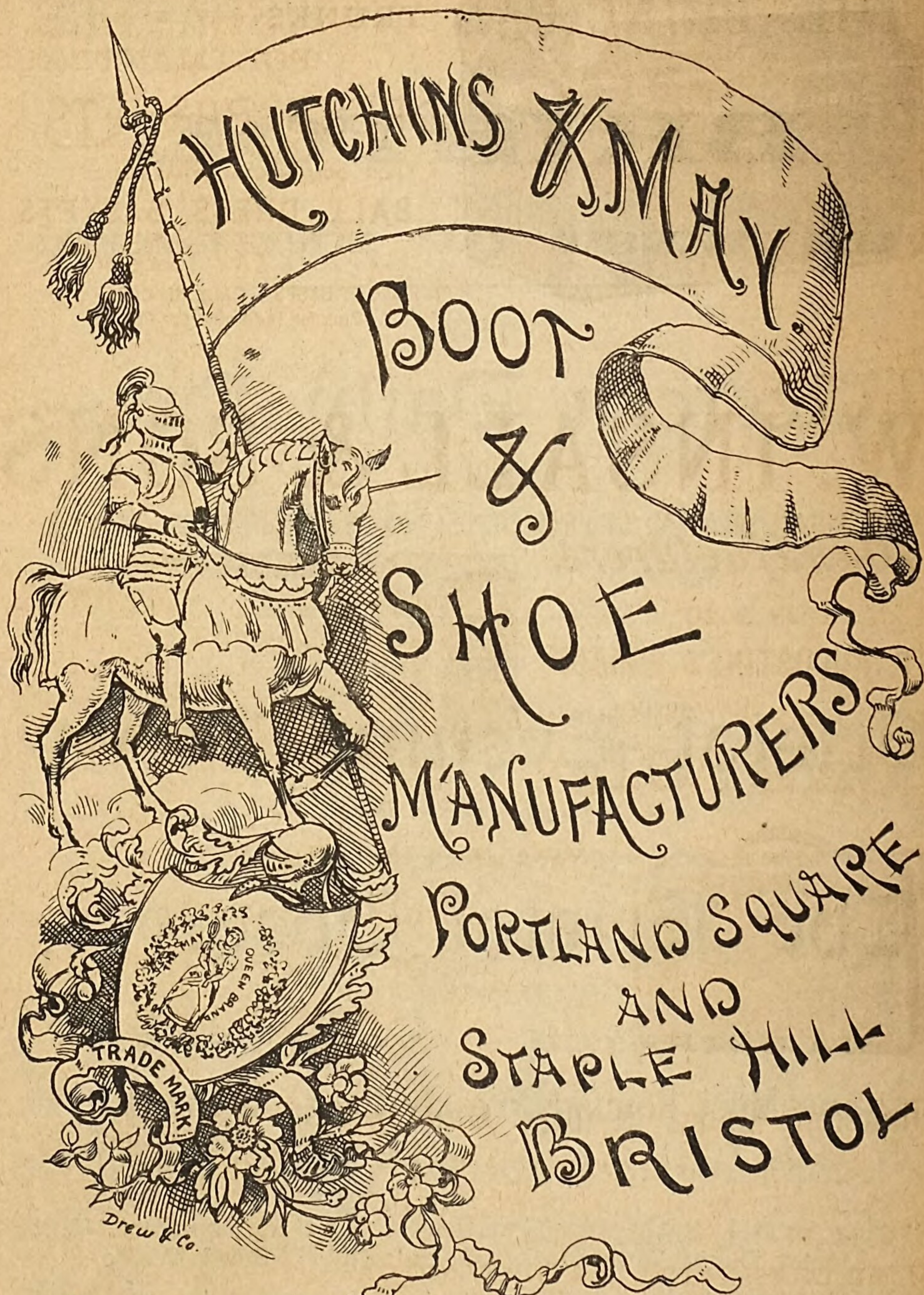
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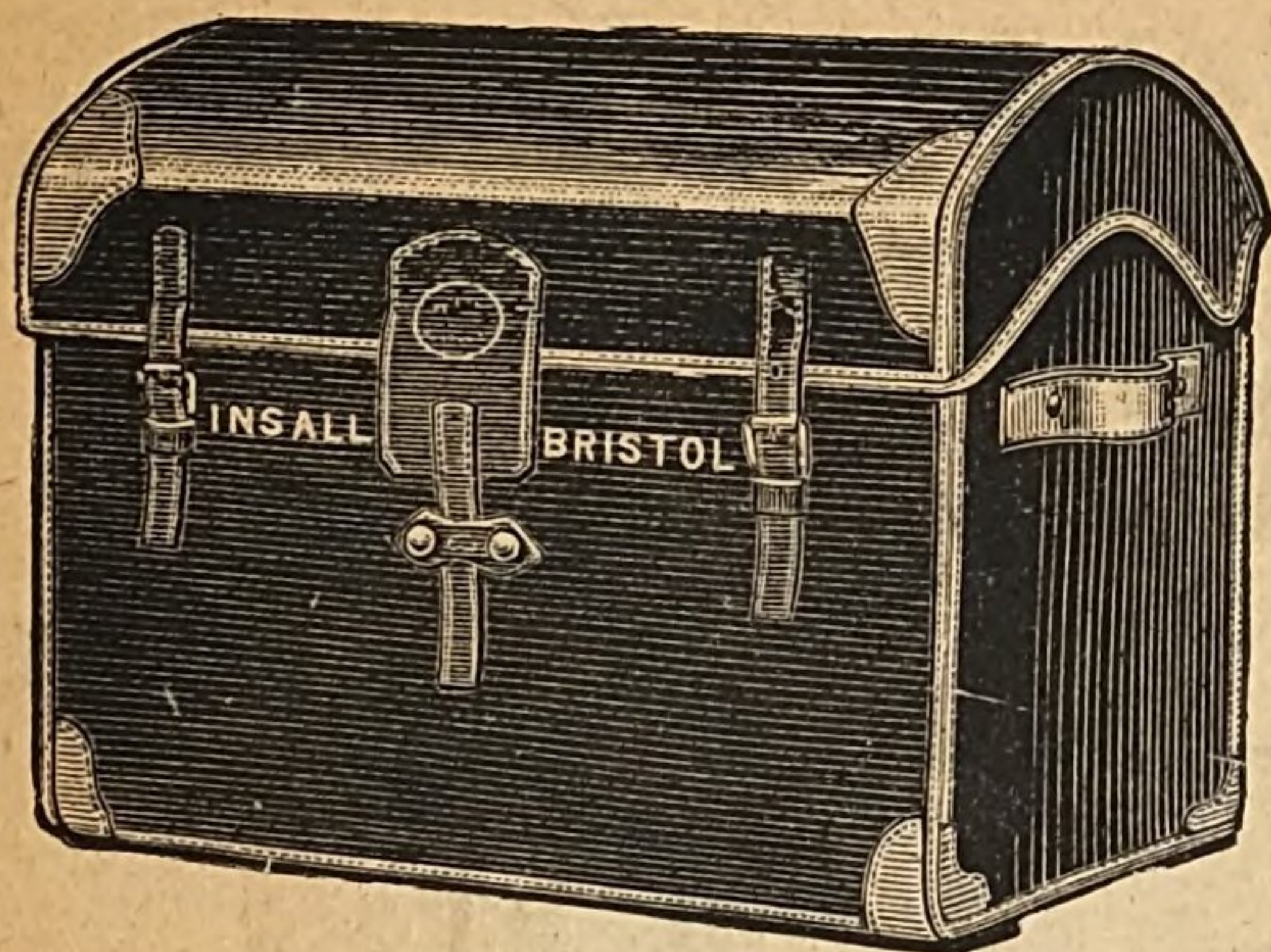
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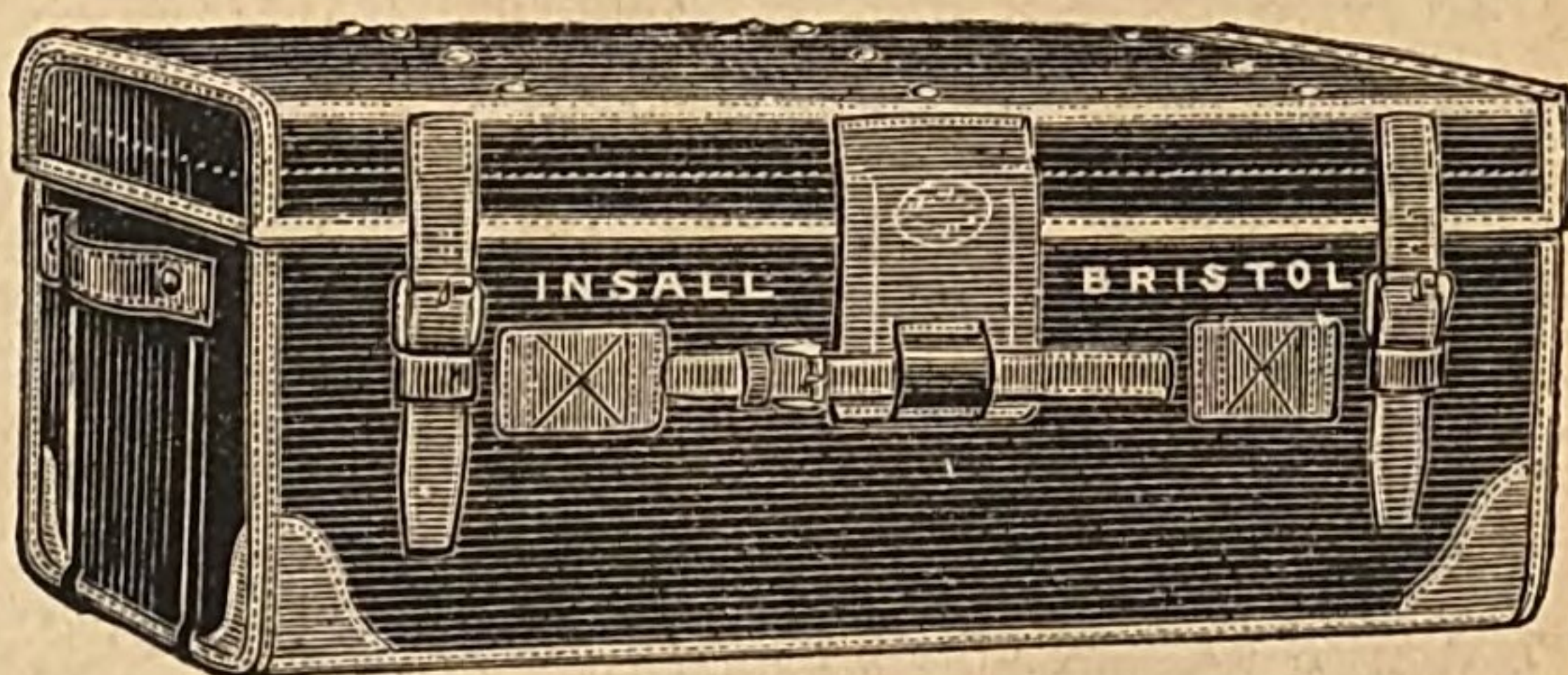
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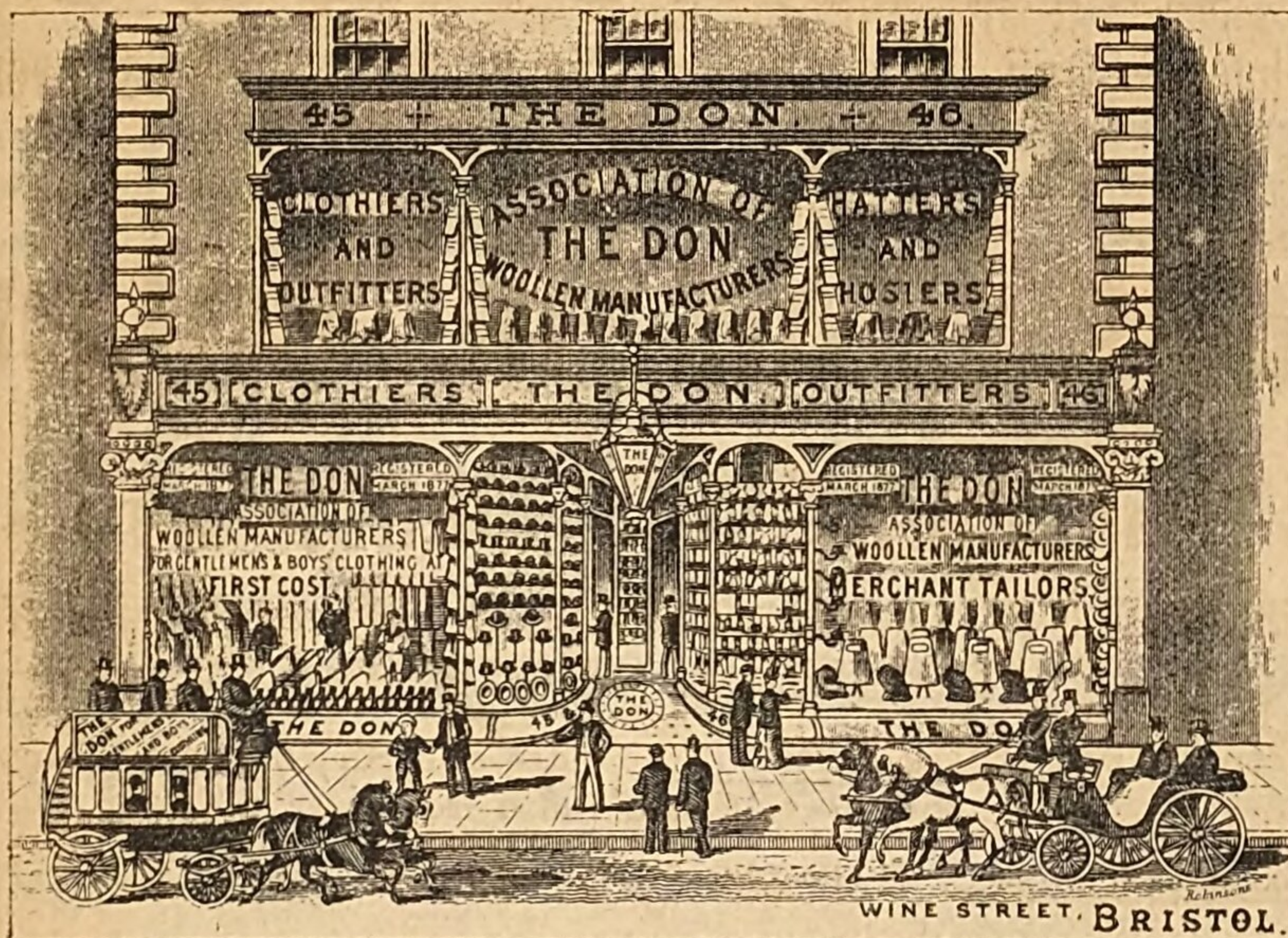
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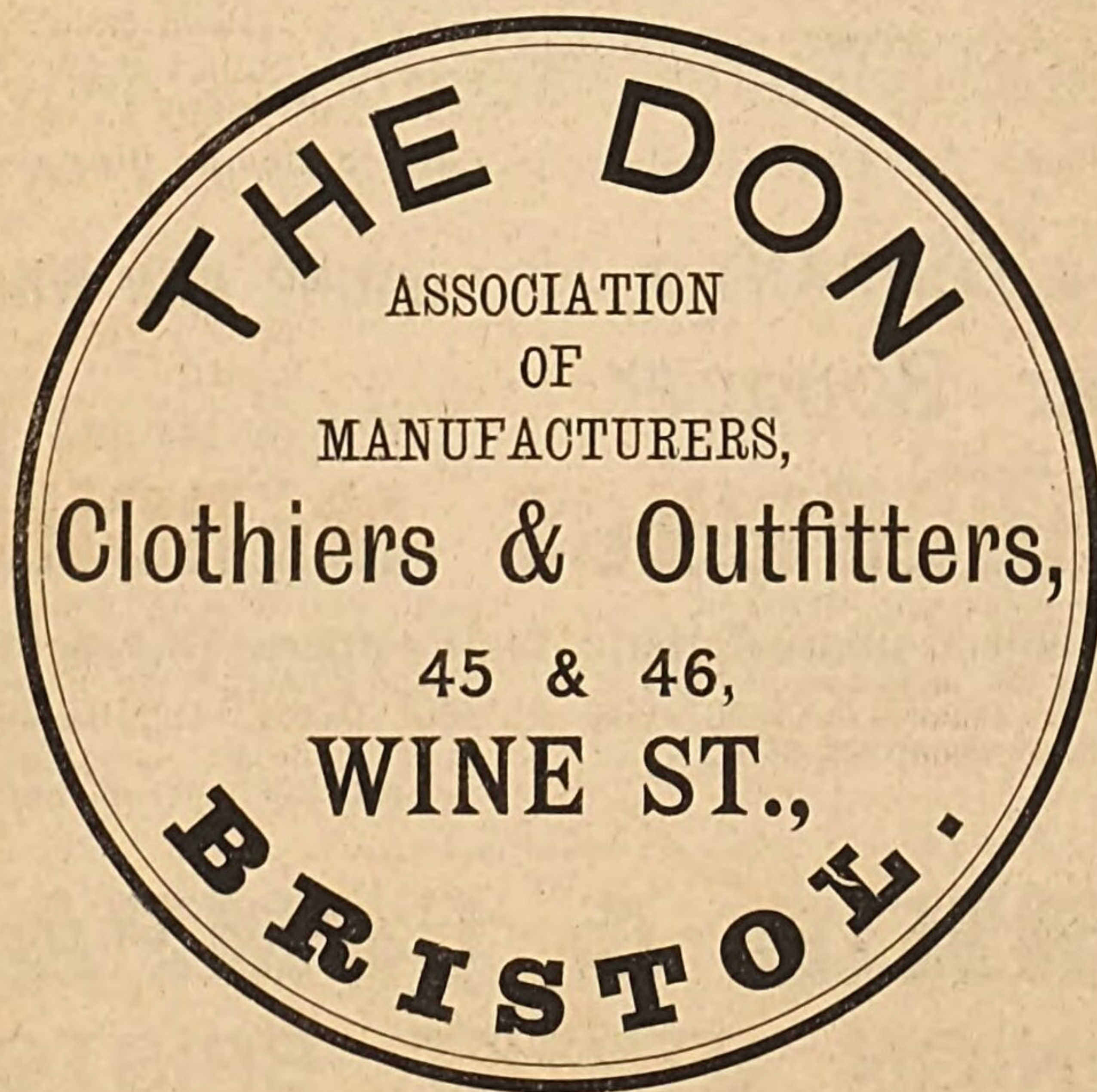
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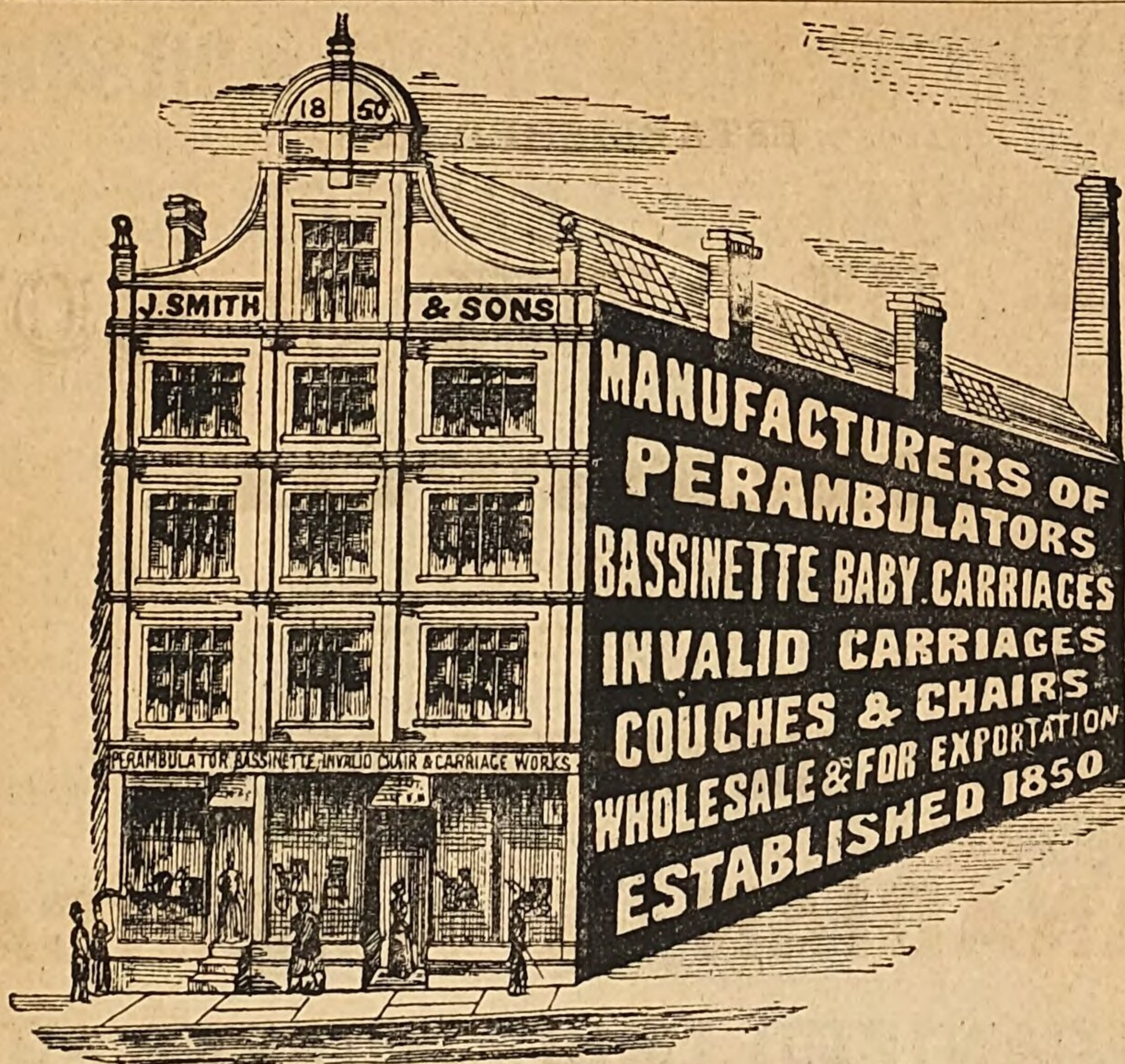
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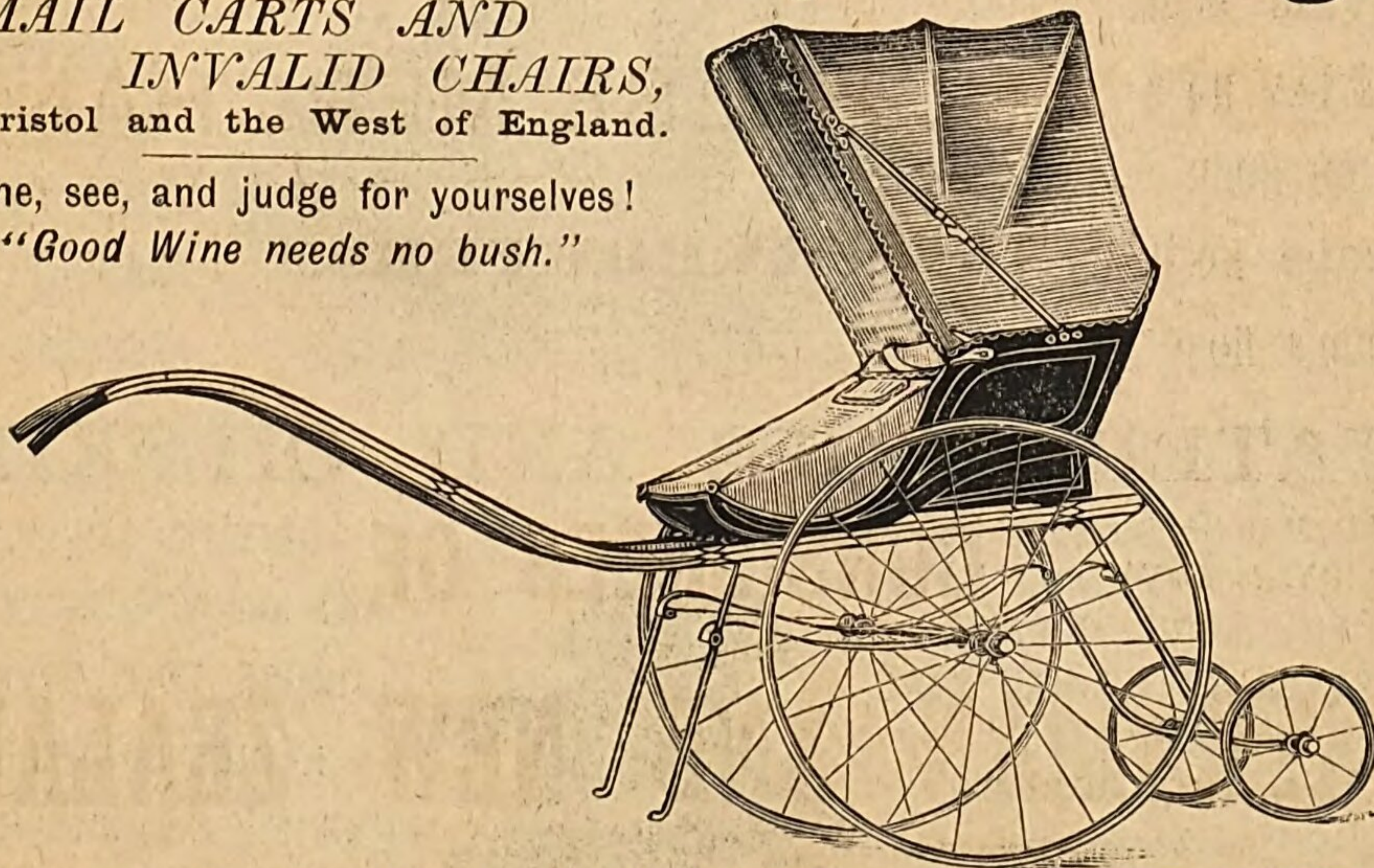
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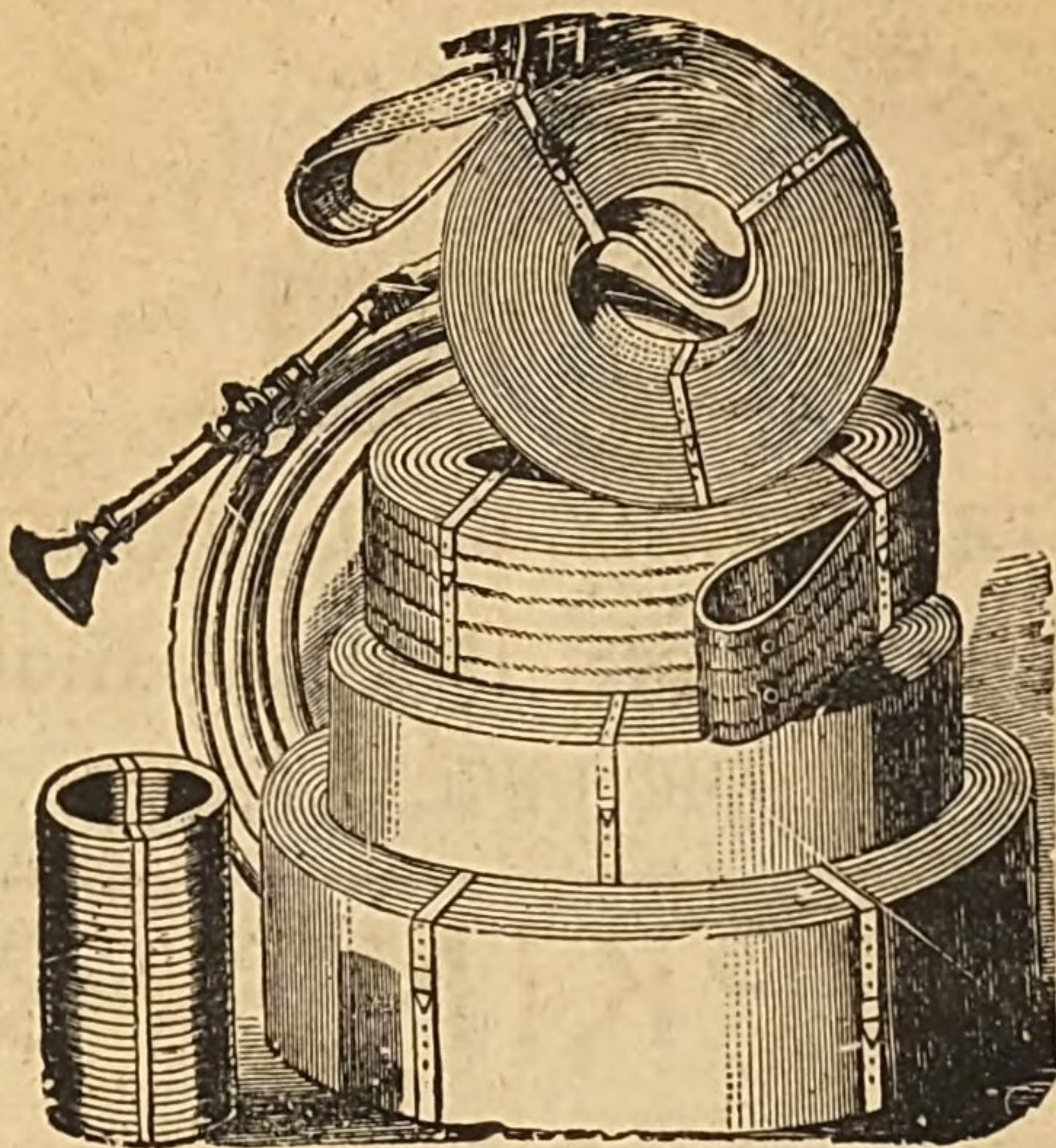
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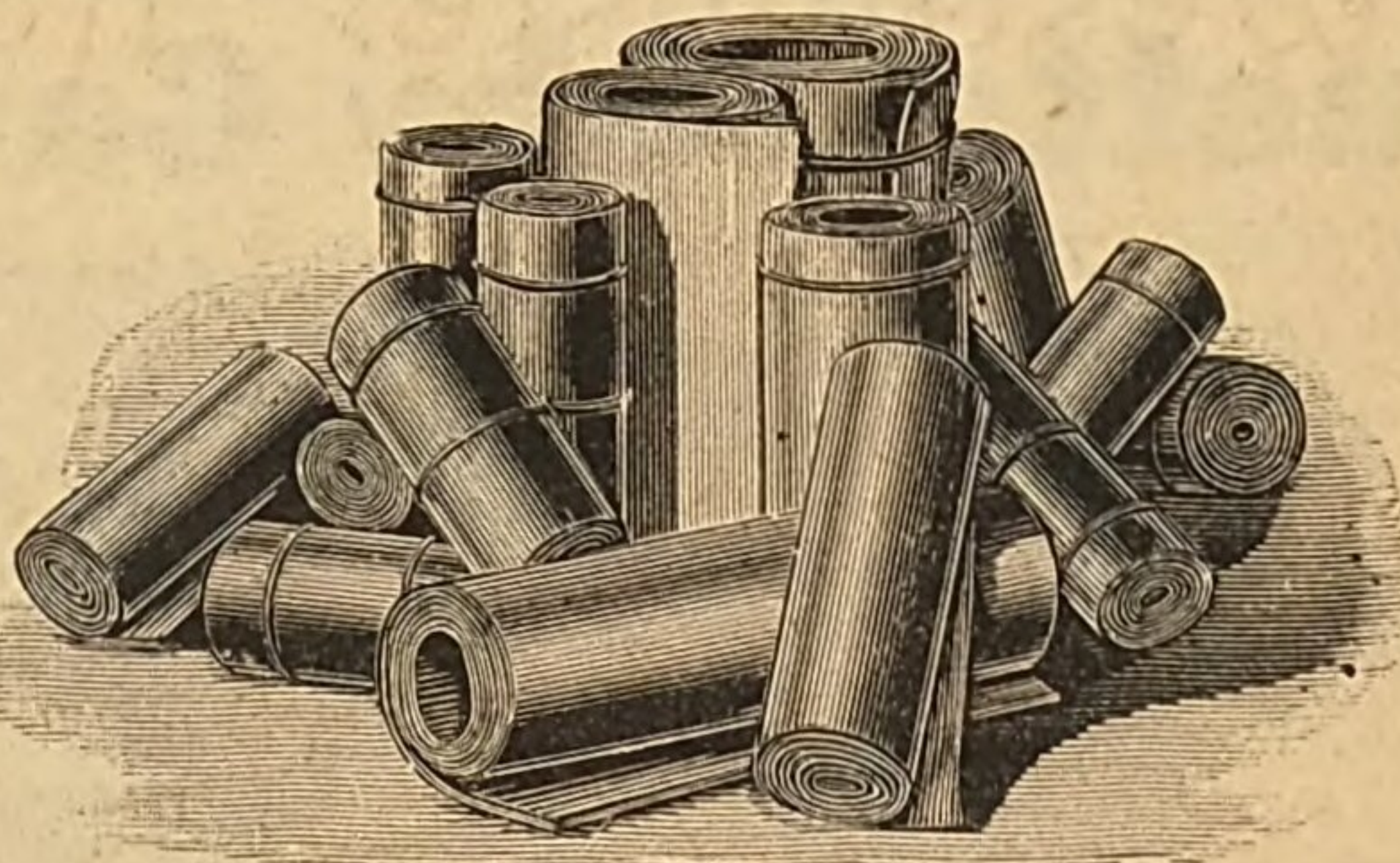
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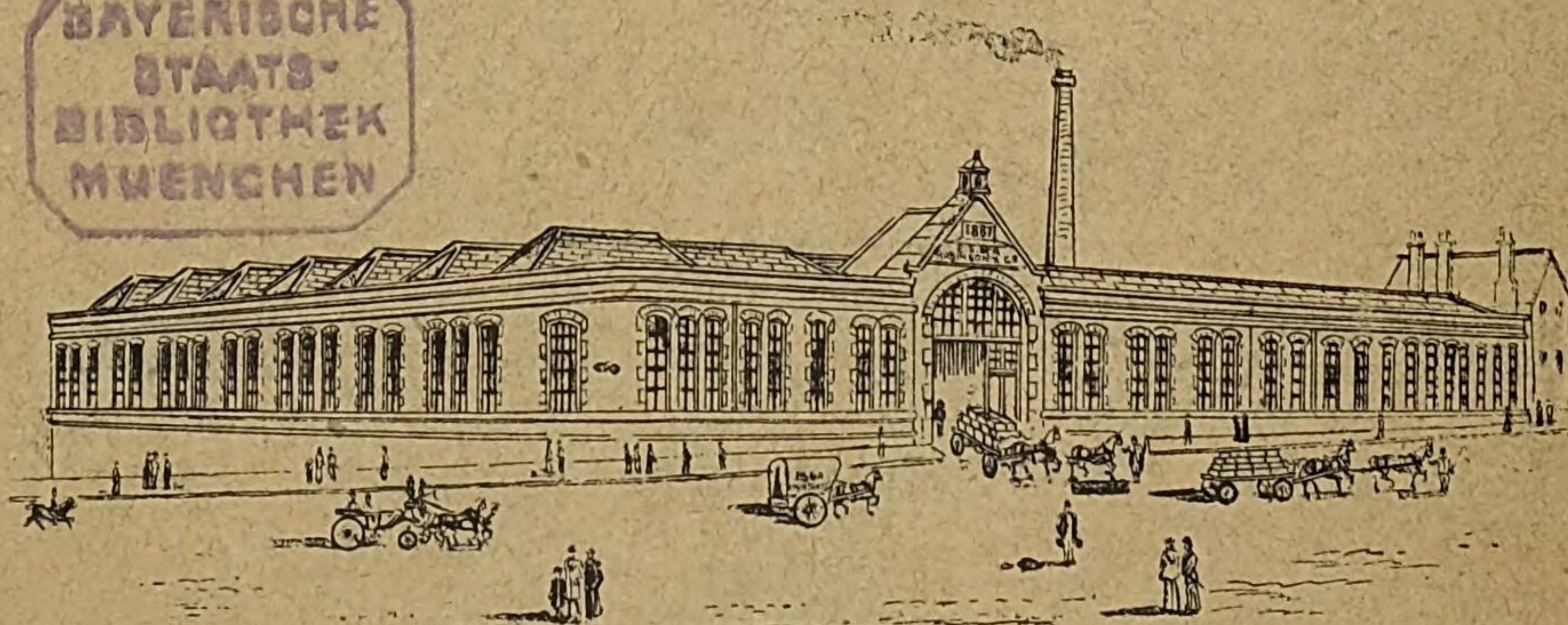
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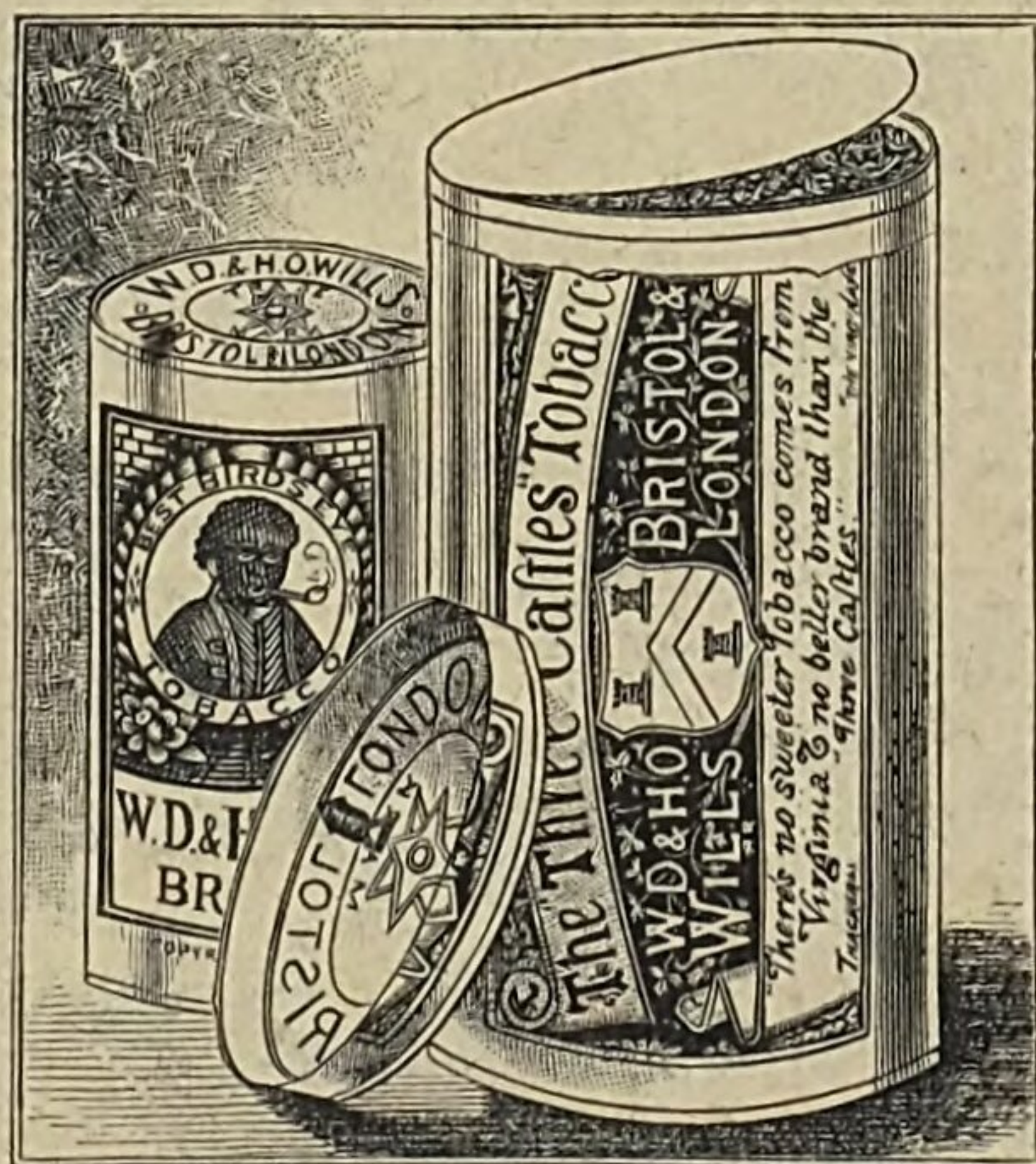
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